128 624 state might be described as an ordered anarchy. Likewise they lack law, if we understand by this term judgements delivered by an independent and impartial authority which has, also, power to enforce its decisions. There are signs that certain changes were taking place in this respect, and at the end of the chapter on the political system we describe the emergence of prophets, persons in whom dwell the spirits of Sky-gods, and we suggest that in them we may perceive the beginnings of political development. Leopard-skin chiefs and prophets are the only ritual specialists who, in our opinion, have any political importance.

128 ●613 614 After an examination of the political structure we describe the lineage system and discuss the relation between the two. Nuer lineages are agnatic, i.e. they consist of persons who trace their descent exclusively through males to a common ancestor. The clan is the largest group of lineages which is definable by reference to rules of exogamy, though agnatic relationship is recognized between several clans. A clan is segmented into lineages, which are diverging branches of descent from a common ancestor. We call the largest segments into which a clan is divided its 'maximal lineages', the segments of a maximal lineage its 'major lineages', the segments of a major lineage its 'minor lineages', and the segments of a minor lineage its 'minimal lineages'. The minimal lineage is the one to which a man usually refers when asked what is his lineage. A lineage is thus a group of agnates, dead or alive, between whom kinship can be traced genealogically, and a clan is an exogamous system of lineages. These lineage groups differ from political groups in that the relationship of their members to one another is based on descent and not on residence, for lineages are dispersed and do not compose exclusive local communities, and, also, in that lineage values often operate in a different range of situations from political values.

128 561 After discussing the lineage system in its relation to territorial segmentation we describe briefly the age-set system. The adult male population falls into stratified groups based on age, and we call these groups 'age-sets'. The members of each set become such by initiation and they remain in it till death. The sets do not form a cycle, but a progressive system, the junior set

805 took place. Moreover, since time is to Nuer an order of events of outstanding significance to a group, each group has its own points of reference and time is consequently relative to structural space, locally considered. This is obvious when we examine the names given to years by different tribes, or sometimes by adjacent tribes, for these are floods, pestilences, famines, wars, &c., experienced by the tribe. In course of time the names of years are forgotten and all events beyond the limits of this crude historical reckoning fade into the dim vista of long long ago. Historical time, in this sense of a sequence of outstanding events of significance to a tribe, goes back much farther than the historical time of smaller groups, but fifty years is probably its limit, and the farther back from the present day the sparser and vaguer become its points of reference.

805 561 However, Nuer have another way of stating roughly when events took place; not in numbers of years, but by reference to the age-set system. Distance between events ceases to be reckoned in time concepts as we understand them and is reckoned in terms of structural distance, being the relation between groups of persons. It is therefore entirely relative to the social structure. Thus a Nuer may say that an event took place after the *Thut* age-set was born or in the initiation period of the *Boiloc* age-set, but no one can say how many years ago it happened. Time is here reckoned in sets. If a man of the *Dangunga* set tells one that an event occurred in the initiation period of the *Thut* set he is saying that it happened three sets before his set, or six sets ago. The age-set system is discussed in Chapter VI. Here it need only be said that we cannot accurately translate a reckoning in sets into a reckoning in years, but that we can roughly estimate a ten-year interval between the commencement of successive sets. There are six sets in existence, the names of the sets are not cyclic, and the order of extinct sets, all but the last, are soon forgotten, so that an age-set reckoning has seven units covering a period of rather under a century.

805 601 •613 The structural system of time-reckoning is partly the selection of points of reference of significance to local groups which give these groups a common and distinctive history; partly the distance between specific sets in the age-set system; and partly

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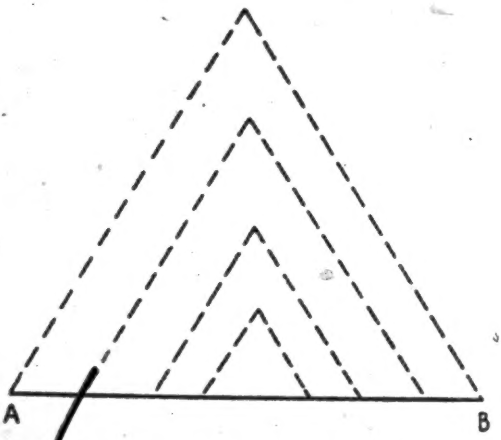
distances of a kinship and lineage order. Four generation-steps (*kath*) in the kinship system are linguistically differentiated relations, grandfather, father, son, and grandson, and within a small kinship group these relationships give a time-depth to members of the group and points of reference in a line of ascent by which their relationships are determined and explained. Any kinship relationship must have a point of reference on a line of ascent, namely a common ancestor, so that such a relationship always has a time connotation couched in structural terms. Beyond the range of the kinship system in this narrow sense the connotation is expressed in terms of the lineage system. As this subject is treated in Chapter V, we limit further discussion of it to an explanatory comment on the diagram above. The base line of the triangle represents a given group of agnates and the dotted lines represent their ghostly agnatic forebears, running from this base to a point in lineage structure, the common ancestor of every member of the group. The farther we extend the range of the group (the longer becomes the base line) the farther back in lineage structure is the common ancestor (the farther from the base line is the apex of the triangle). The four triangles are thus the time depths of four extensions of agnatic relationship on an existential plane and represent minimal, minor, major, and maximal lineages of a clan. Lineage time is thus the structural distance between groups of persons on the line *AB*. Structural time therefore



1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

cannot be understood until structural distance is known, since it is a reflection of it, and we must, therefore, ask the reader to forgive a certain obscurity at this point and to reserve criticism till we have had an opportunity of explaining more clearly what is meant by structural distance. 805 601 613 ●

We have restricted our discussion to Nuer systems of time-reckoning and have not considered the way in which an individual perceives time. The subject bristles with difficulties. Thus an individual may reckon the passage of time by reference to the physical appearance and status of other individuals and to changes in his own life-history, but such a method of reckoning time has no wide collective validity. We confess, however, that our observations on the matter have been slight and that a fuller analysis is beyond our powers. We have merely indicated those aspects of the problem which are directly related to the description of modes of livelihood which has gone before and to the description of political institutions which follows. 805

We have remarked that the movement of structural time is, in a sense, an illusion, for the structure remains fairly constant and the perception of time is no more than the movement of persons, often as groups, through the structure. Thus age-sets succeed one another for ever, but there are never more than six in existence and the relative positions occupied by these six sets at any time are fixed structural points through which actual sets of persons pass in endless succession. Similarly, for reasons which we explain later, the Nuer system of lineages may be considered a fixed system, there being a constant number of steps between living persons and the founder of their clan and the lineages having a constant position relative to one another. However many generations succeed one another the depth and range of lineages does not increase unless there has been structural change. These statements are discussed more fully on pp. 198–200. 805 561 613

Beyond the limits of historical time we enter a plane of tradition in which a certain element of historical fact may be supposed to be incorporated in a complex of myth. Here the points of reference are the structural ones we have indicated. At one end this plane merges into history; at the other end into myth. Time perspective is here not a true impression of actual distances like that created by our dating technique, but a 805 173

if there is a quarrel between the Nyarkwac tertiary section and 619
the Rumjok secondary section, as has occurred recently over 628
water rights at Fading, Leng and Nyarkwac will unite against their common enemy Rumjok which, in its turn, forms a coalition of the various segments into which it is divided. If there is a fight between the Mor and the Gun primary sections, Rumjok and Gaatbal will unite against the combined Mor sections: Gaaliek, Jimac, and Jaajoah. If there is fighting against the Gaajok or the Gaawar the primary sections, Gun and Mor, will, at any rate in theory, combine and a united Lou tribe will take the field, since both sections belong to the same political group and since their dominant lineages belong to the same clan. Certainly they used to unite in raids on the Dinka.

Among the Eastern Gaajok, Minyal, Wang, and Nyathol 619
sections combine against Yol. Also Thiur, Dwong, and Kwith 628
sections unite for war. These fights between tribal sections and
the feuds that result from them, though based on a territorial 613
principle, are often represented in terms of lineages, since there is a close relation between territorial segments and lineage segments, and Nuer habitually express social obligations in a kinship idiom. Thus in telling me that Wangkac and Yol would unite for war against any other section Nuer stated the proposition by saying that the WANGKAC and YOL lineages, which are the dominant lineages in these sections, would unite because their ancestors were sons of the same mother. We shall see in Chapter V that Nuer generally speak in such terms.

This principle of segmentation and the opposition between 619
segments is the same in every section of a tribe and extends
beyond the tribe to relations between tribes, especially among 628
the smaller Western Nuer tribes, which coalesce more easily and frequently in raiding the Dinka and in fighting one another than the larger tribes to the east of the Nile. Thus a man of the Fadang section of the Bor tribe exemplified it when he told me, 'We fight against the Rengyan, but when either of us is fighting a third party we combine with them'. It can be stated in hypothetical terms by the Nuer themselves and can best be represented in this way. In the diagram on p. 144, when Z^1 fights Z^2 no other section is involved. When Z^1 fights Y^1, Z^1 and Z^2 unite as Y^2. When Y^1 fights X^1, Y^1 and Y^2 unite, and so do X^1

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fight. The political integument may in consequence be stretched eventually to the breaking-point and the tribe split into two. The rent between sections enlarges until they have little to do with each other beyond occasional uniting for raids; and feuds between their members are settled, if at all, with greater difficulty and casualness.

VII

The likelihood of a homicide developing into a blood-feud, its force, and its chances of settlement are thus dependent on the structural interrelations of the persons concerned. Moreover, the blood-feud may be viewed as a structural movement between political segments by which the form of the Nuer political system, as we know it, is maintained. It is true that only close agnatic kin of both sides are immediately and directly involved, but feuds between persons belonging to different tribal sections sooner or later influence the interrelations of the whole communities to which they belong.

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The kinsmen of a slain man try to kill the *gwan thunga*, the slayer, but they have a right to kill any of his close agnates (*gaat gwanlen*). They must not kill sons of the mother's brother, father's sister, or mother's sister, because these people do not belong to the slayer's lineage. Also, only the minimal lineages on both sides are directly involved in the feud. However, the significance of the feud may be held to lie less in the ease of settlement within smaller groups than in the difficulties of settlement within larger groups, which participate indirectly in the conflict. We have noted that people at feud may not eat in the same homesteads, and, as a man eats in all the homesteads of his village, the villagers at once come within the scope of the prohibition and enter into a state of ritual opposition to each other. All the people of a village are generally in some way related to one another and have also a strong sense of community, so that if any fighting occurs between their village and another on account of a feud in which some of their members are involved the whole village is likely to be drawn into it. Thus at dances men of each village who attend them arrive in war formation and maintain an unbroken line throughout the dance, so that if one of them is attacked the others are at his side and

628 602 are bound to assist him. People not directly affected by the feud may thus be compelled to assist the principals.

628 182 We have noted, moreover, that the intensity of a feud and the manner of its prosecution depend on the structural relationship of the persons concerned in the political system. A feud cannot be tolerated within a village and it is impossible to maintain one for a long period between nearby villages. Consequently, although fights most frequently occur within a village or between neighbouring villages and camps, a feud, in the sense of a relation between parties between whom there is an unsettled debt of homicide which can be settled either by vengeance or by payment of compensation—a temporary state of active hostility which does not compel immediate settlement but which requires eventual conclusion—can only persist between tribal sections which are near enough to each other for the maintenance of actively hostile relations and far enough from each other for these relations not to inhibit essential social contacts of a more peaceable kind. A feud has little significance unless there are social relations of some kind which can be broken off and resumed, and, at the same time, these relations necessitate eventual settlement if there is not to be complete cleavage. The function of the feud, viewed in this way, is, therefore, to maintain the structural equilibrium between opposed tribal segments which are, nevertheless, politically fused in relation to larger units.

628 613 602 Through the feud whole sections are left in a state of hostility towards one another, without the hostility leading to frequent warfare, for the scope of direct vengeance is limited to small kinship groups and their efforts to exact it are not incessant. There is a fight between two sections and some people are killed on either side. Only those lineages which have lost a member are in a state of direct feud with the lineages which they have deprived of a member, but through common residence, local patriotism, and a network of kinship ties, the whole sections participate in the enmity that results, and the prosecution of the feuds may lead to further fighting between the communities concerned and to a multiplication of feuds between them. Thus when the Nyarkwac section of the Lou tribe fought the Leng section, the LAM lineage and the people who live with them were

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ranged against the MAR, KWOTH, and MALUAL lineages and the people who live with them; the MANTHIEPNI lineage was ranged against the DUMIEN lineage; and so forth. Only these minimal lineages were involved with one another in the feuds that resulted, and not collateral lineages, even though they took part in the fight in other sectors of it, but the hostility between the sections was common to all their members. A good example of how Nuer feel in such matters is furnished by their reactions at Muot Dit cattle camp when the Government seized hostages to compel them to hand over two prophets. Their main complaint to me was that the hostages did not belong to the same lineages as the prophets and were therefore not directly concerned in the issue. The Government was looking at the affair in territorial terms, they in kinship terms on analogy with the conventions of a feud.

Apart from ritual observances, kinship obligations, community sentiment, and so forth, there is a further reason why blood-feuds between small lineages, especially when there are many of them, develop into states of feud, and tend to maintain hostile feelings between communities. As is explained in Chapter V every community is associated with a lineage in such a way that all persons in the community who are not members of the lineage are assimilated to it in political relations which are, therefore, often expressed in lineage values. Hence a blood-feud between small agnatic groups is translated into a feud, in the more general sense, between the lineages with which these groups are associated through the expression of the disturbed relations in terms of their structure, and the communities associated with the lineages are involved in mutual hostility.

Hostility between smaller segments of a tribe may involve the larger segments of which they form part. A quarrel between two villages may thus, as we have noted, bring about a fight between secondary, and even primary, tribal sections. The interrelations between larger sections are operated, as it were, by the interrelations between smaller sections. When a section in which there are unsettled feuds fights another section all quarrels are neglected for the time and the whole section combines for action.

The feud is a political institution, being an approved and

threat forming part of the proceedings. Certainly to-day chiefs 624
have no authority in virtue of their power of cursing. He is also 789
known as *kuaar twac* because he alone wears a leopard-skin (*twac*) across his shoulders. A chief may be seen wearing one in Mr. Corfield's photograph on Plate XXIV. The word *kuaar* has ritual associations in all the Nilotic languages, but, without discussing further what word might best define its scope of reference in Nuer, we intend to refer to the person in this account, as we have done heretofore, as a chief, with the caution that we do not thereby imply that he has any secular authority, for we hold that his public acts are mainly ritual.

Nevertheless, his function is political, for relations between 624
political groups are regulated through him, though he is not
a political authority controlling them. His activities are 628
chiefly concerned with settlement of blood-feuds, for a feud cannot be settled without his intervention, and his political significance lies in this fact. Chiefs sometimes prevent fights between communities by running between the two lines of combatants and hoeing up the earth here and there. The older men then try to restrain the youths and obtain a settlement of the dispute by discussion. However, we think that a fight can only be prevented in this way when the disputants are close neighbours and anxious not to kill one another.

Besides the part they play in feuds, chiefs perform ritual to cleanse parties to incestuous congress, and they possess slight rain-making powers, though Nuer do not attach much importance to the art. On the whole we may say that Nuer chiefs are sacred persons, but that their sacredness gives them no general authority outside specific social situations. I have never seen Nuer treat a chief with more respect than they treat other people or speak of them as persons of much importance. They regard them as agents through whom disputes of a certain kind can be settled and defilement of a certain kind can be effaced, and I have often heard remarks such as this: 'We took hold of them and gave them leopard skins and made them our chiefs to do the talking at sacrifices for homicide.' Their ritual sphere seldom extends beyond a tribal section.

Only certain lineages are chiefs and only some men of these 624
lineages practise as such. It is, perhaps, significant that in many 613

624 613 parts of Nuerland, including most of the area with which I am acquainted, chiefs do not belong to the dominant clans in the tribes in which they function, though some of them are said to be aristocrats in parts of Eastern Gaajak, Gaawar, and Leek. Most of those whose clans I know belong to the GAATLEAK and JIMEM clans which nowhere have aristocratic status. Since quarrels between tribal sections are expressed in terms of lineages of the dominant clan associated with the sections, as will be explained in the following chapter, the chief, having no position in the system of dominant lineages, is thereby more fitted to mediate between them. He is not a member of the hereditary owners of the tribal land, but is a stranger living there. A chief may act as such in whatever tribe he resides in. If a chief is killed the ceremonies connected with payment of compensation are performed by an aristocrat of the tribe. This is probably because, even when the chiefs of an area are not all members of one clan, they are believed to have a kind of kinship through their common badge of the leopard skin and cannot marry into one another's families. We regard chiefs as a category of ritual experts and do not consider that they comprise in any way a class or rank. We believe their social function to be a mechanism by which the equilibrium of the political system is maintained through the institution of the feud. The slight authority of chiefs and, in many parts, their position outside the dominant clan, accord with this view.

624 628 In taking the view that to regard the leopard-skin chief as a political agent or a judicial authority is to misunderstand the constitution of Nuer society and to be blind to its fundamental principles, we have to account for the part he plays in the settlement of feuds. We have stated that he has no judicial or executive authority. It is not his duty to decide on the merits of a case of homicide. It would never occur to Nuer that a judgement of any kind was required. Likewise he has no means of compelling people to pay or to accept blood-cattle. He has no powerful kinsmen or the backing of a populous community to support him. He is simply a mediator in a specific social situation and his mediation is only successful because community ties are acknowledged by both parties and because they wish to avoid, for the time being at any rate, further hostilities.

554 pass them by because sacred powers often give a man prestige from which he may attain local eminence as an important elder, if they are combined with wealth, ability, and wide kinship connexions.

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Next to prophets and leopard-skin chiefs the ritual status that carries with it most prestige is that of the *wut ghok*, the Man of the Cattle. Certain lineages have hereditary ritual powers in relation to cattle and are asked to cure sick beasts and to make barren cows fruitful, though only some members of these lineages use their powers. Like leopard-skin chiefs, Men of the Cattle are often members of stranger lineages and not of the aristocratic clan of their tribe. I was told that their curse is feared, as it can be directed to the cattle, and that Nuer do not care to offend them, but, outside tradition, I have not recorded any occasion of its utterance. Apart from the few Men of the Cattle who play a part in the regulation of Age-sets (see Chap. VI), and those who are sometimes consulted about migration to new pastures, they have no public functions. One *wut ghok* of the Eastern Gaajok became very rich and powerful a generation ago, but his prestige was largely due to his possession of magic.

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Besides the *kuaa muon*, who has a ritual relationship to the earth, and the *wut ghok*, who has a ritual relationship to the cattle, there are a number of totemic specialists whose ritual connexion with lions, crocodiles, weaver birds, &c., enables them to influence the behaviour of these creatures. A totemic specialist is a possessor (*gwan*) of the spirit (*kwoth*) of his totem. Totemic specialists have no political significance and have no social influence in virtue of their powers alone. There is a war specialist whose duty it is to shake a spear in the face of the enemy and to deliver an invocation against them. He is known as *gwan muot*, possessor of the spear, or *ngul*, and is often, perhaps always, a member of a senior lineage of the dominant clan of the tribe, for he invokes the spear by the spear-name of the clan. There are also magicians of various kinds: leeches, diviners, owners of medicines, and owners of fetishes. Of these specialists only owners of fetishes become prominent members of their communities on account of their ritual powers. Nuer [776] are very much afraid of fetish spirits and believe them to be so powerful that they will even purchase them with cattle. A fetish-owner may become the most influential man in the village, and I have been surprised at the respect and fear with which his neighbours sometimes treat him. Nevertheless, he has no defined authority in controlling the relations of the villagers to one another nor does he represent the village in its relations with neighbouring communities.

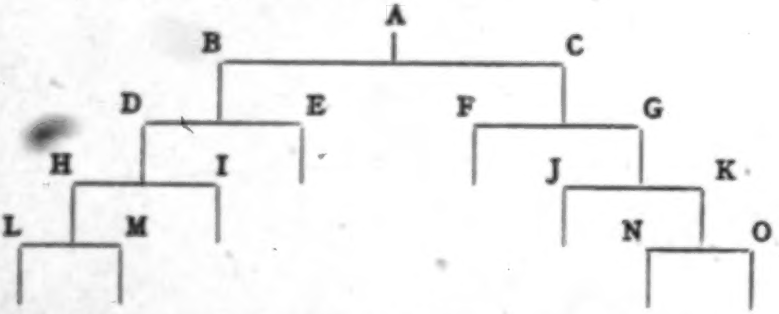
CHAPTER V

THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

I

614 613 MANY characteristics of Nuer lineages and clans belong to the study of kinship which we hope to make in a subsequent volume. Here only those characters which are strictly relevant to the territorial system are discussed. We begin, however, by a formal definition of clan, lineage, and kin. A Nuer clan is the largest group of agnates who trace their descent from a common ancestor and between whom marriage is forbidden and sexual relations considered incestuous. It is not merely an undifferentiated group of persons who recognize their common agnatic kinship, as are some African clans, but is a highly segmented genealogical structure. We refer to these genealogical segments of a clan as its lineages. The relationship of any member of a lineage to any other member of it can be exactly stated in genealogical terms and, therefore, also his relationship to members of other lineages of the same clan can be traced, since the relationship of one lineage to another is genealogically known. A clan is a system of lineages and a lineage is a genealogical segment of a clan. One might speak of the whole clan as a lineage, but we prefer to speak of lineages as segments of it and to define them as such. Alternatively one may speak of a lineage as an agnatic group the members of which are genealogically linked, and of a clan as a system of such groups, the system being, among the Nuer, a genealogical system. In the diagram on p. 193 clan A is segmented into maximal lineages B and C and these bifurcate into major lineages D, E, F, and G. Minor lineages H, I, J, and K are segments of major lineages D and G, and L, M, N, and O are minimal lineages which are segments of H and K. It was found that words to describe four stages of lineage segmentation are sufficient when speaking of even the largest clans. The commonest Nuer word for a lineage is *thok dwiel* and the smallest genealogical unit they describe as a *thok dwiel* has a time depth of from three to five generations from living persons. A whole clan is thus a genealogical

structure, and the letters in the diagram represent persons from 614
whom the clan and its segments trace their descent and from
whom they often take their names. There must be at least 613
twenty such clans in Nuerland, without taking into account
numerous small lineages of Dinka origin.



A lineage in the sense in which we generally employ this word is a group of living agnates, descended from the founder of that particular line. Logically it also includes dead persons descended from the founder—and we sometimes use the word to include them also—but these dead persons are only significant in that their genealogical position explains the relationships between the living. It is clear from the context whether the word is used in a more or less inclusive sense.

Clans and lineages have names, possess various ritual symbols, and observe certain reciprocal ceremonial relations. They have spear-names which are shouted out at ceremonies, honorific titles by which people are sometimes addressed, totemic and other mystical affiliations, and ceremonial status towards one another.

Agnatic kinship between lineages is called *buth*. *Buth* is 611
always an agnatic relationship between groups of persons, and
only between persons in virtue of their membership of groups.
Buth agnation is to be distinguished from kinship in the sense
of relationship between persons, e.g. between a man and his
father's brother and mother's brother. Cognation in this sense
the Nuer call *mar*. Any person to whom a man can trace any
genealogical link, whether through males or females, is *mar* to
him. A man's *mar* are consequently all his father's kin and all 611
his mother's kin, and we call this cognatic category his kindred. 612

611 612 In normal usage the word refers to close relatives only. Therefore, as *mar* includes close agnates, the word *buth* is used only in reference to distant agnates, between whom and the speaker there is lineage cleavage. There is *buth* relationship between lineages of the same clan and also between related clans which have the same ancestor but do not compose an exogamous unit. A Dinka can be given *buth* relationship to a Nuer lineage by being adopted into a collateral lineage. We thus formally distinguish between the lineage system, which is a system of agnatic groups, and the kinship system, which is a system of categories of relationship to any individual; and we speak of these relationships as a man's paternal kin and his maternal kin, and both together as his kindred.

613 619 Political and lineage groups are not identical, but they have a certain correspondence and often bear the same name, for a tribal area and its divisions are often called after the clans and lineages which are supposed to have first occupied them. This makes their inter-relation a very difficult problem to investigate and has led to some confusion in writings on the Nuer. Thus Gaawar is the name of a tribal area, of the tribesmen who inhabit it, and of the members of a clan which have in that area a socially dominant status. Likewise Gaajok and Gaajak are names of territories, tribes, and lineages. To clarify description clan and lineage names are therefore printed in small capitals. Hence, when we say that a man is a Gaawar we mean that he is a Gaawar tribesman, a man who resides in Gaawar country, whereas when we say that he is a GAAWAR we mean that he is a member of the GAAWAR clan, a descendant in the male line from War, the founder of the dominant clan in Gaawar country.

II

613 614 Three trees of clan descent are presented in the following section in a form conventional to us, and which would also commend itself to Nuer, who sometimes speak of a lineage as *kar*, a branch, as illustrations of the way in which lineages split up, each being a branch of a larger one. The JINACA are the dominant clan in the Lou and Rengyan tribes, the GATGANKIIR are the dominant clan in the Jikany tribes, and the (GAA)THIANG

are the dominant clan in the Thiang tribe. Only one line of 613
descent is shown from the roots to the twigs, from the clan 614
ancestor to the minimal lineages, but it is indicated where the other main branches and boughs, the other maximal, major, and minor lineages leave the stem.

III

We have defined lineage and clan and give some examples of them in diagrams. In this section we note some characteristics of both which are germane to our inquiry. It may at once be said that it is not easy to discover a Nuer's clan, for a clan is not to Nuer an abstraction and there is no word in their language that can be translated 'clan' in ours. One may obtain the name of a man's clan by asking him who was his 'ancestor of yore' or his 'first ancestor' (*gwandong*) or what are his 'seeds' (*kwai*), but it is only when one already knows the clans and their lineages and their various ritual symbols, as the Nuer does, that one can easily place a man's clan through his lineage or by his spear-name and honorific salutation, for Nuer speak fluently in terms of lineages. A lineage is *thok mac*, the hearth, or *thok dwiel*, the entrance to the hut, or one may speak of *kar*, a branch. *Thok dwiel* is the commonest expression to denote a line of agnatic descent in those situations when genealogical exactness and precision are relevant, but in normal everyday usage Nuer employ the word *cieng*, as will be explained later. The clan has itself a position analogous to that of a lineage in the clan system, and it is significant to the Nuer not so much as a unique group as a segment in a system of groups, for it acquires its singularity only as part of a system.

A lineage is a relative term, since its range of reference depends on the particular person who is selected as the point of departure in tracing descent. Thus, if we were to begin with a father, the *thok dwiel* would include only sons and daughters, but if we were to take a grandfather as our point of departure, it would include all his sons and daughters and the children of his sons. A larger and larger number of agnates would be included the higher up in the line of ascent we were to take the point of departure for counting descendants. It might be maintained that the smallest possible lineage are the sons and daughters of

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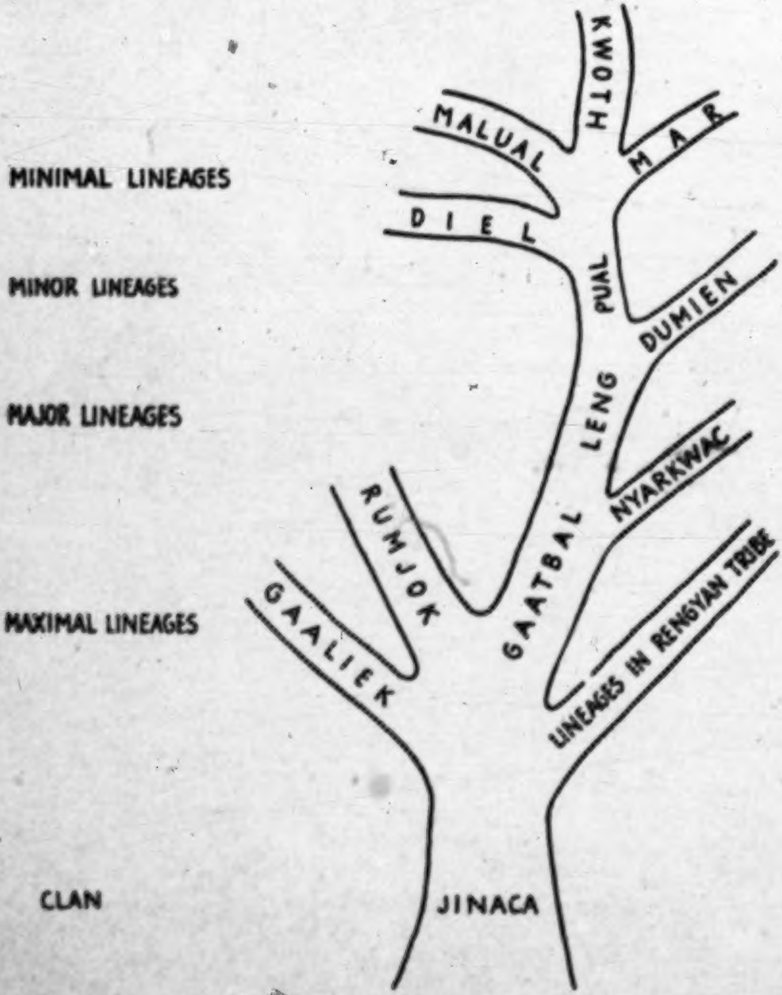
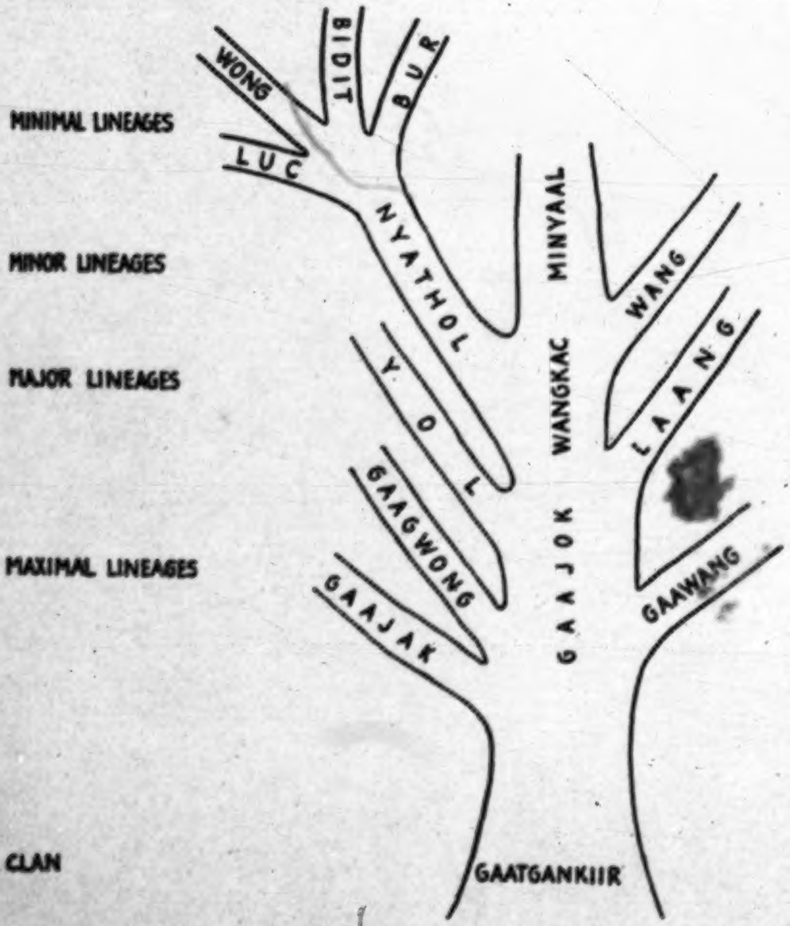
one man, but Nuer do not refer to them as a *thok dwiel*. They are, with their father and their mother, a family and household. One cannot say definitely how far up a line of ascent Nuer will

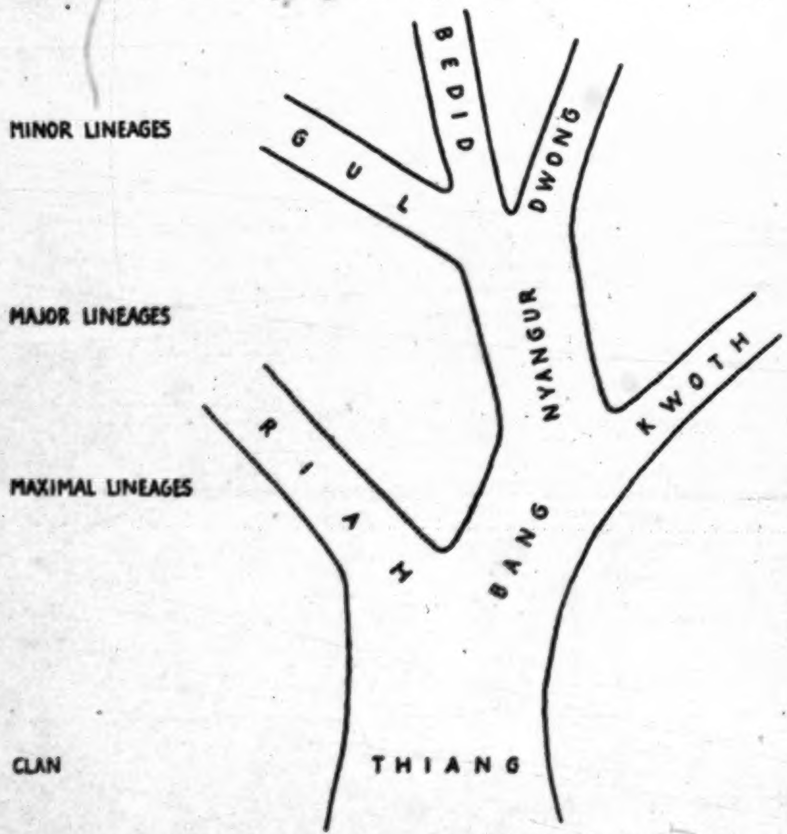

MINIMAL LINEAGES
MINOR LINEAGES
MAJOR LINEAGES
MAXIMAL LINEAGES
CLAN
KWOTH
MALUAL
MAR
DIEL
PUAL
DUMIEN
LENG
NYARKWAC
RUMJOK
GAATBAL
GAALIEK
LINEAGES IN RENGYAN TRIBE
JINACA

go in selecting the apex of a minimal lineage. They may go back only two steps, to the grandfather, making in all three generations of agnates, but a minimal lineage of four or five generations is more usual. Apart from Nuer usage, we consider it important to define lineages as groups with a depth of at least three generations, since they are then distinct structural segments in a system of such segments and not easily confused with domestic groups.

The Nuer clan, being thus highly segmented, has many of the characteristics which we have found in tribal structure. Its lineages are distinct groups only in relation to each other. Thus, in the diagram on p. 193, M is a group only in opposition to L, H is a group only in opposition to I, D is a group only in opposition to E, and so on. There is always fusion of collateral lineages of the same branch in relation to a collateral branch, e.g. in the diagram, L and M are a single minor lineage, H, in opposition to I, and not separate lineages; and D and E are a


MINIMAL LINEAGES
MINOR LINEAGES
MAJOR LINEAGES
MAXIMAL LINEAGES
CLAN
WONG
BIDIT
BUR
LUC
NYATHOL
MINYAAL
WANG
YOL
LAANG
WANGKAC
GAAGWONG
GAAJOK
GAAWANG
GAAJAK
GAATGANKIIR

613 614 single maximal lineage, B, in opposition to C, and not separate lineages. Hence two lineages which are equal and opposite are composite in relation to a third, so that a man is a member of a lineage in relation to a certain group and not a member of it in relation to a different group. Lineage values are thus essentially relative like tribal values, and we suggest later that the processes of lineage segmentation and political segmentation are to some extent co-ordinate.


MINOR LINEAGES
MAJOR LINEAGES
MAXIMAL LINEAGES
CLAN
GUL
BEDID
DWONG
NYANGUR
KWOTH
RIAH
BANG
THIANG

613 614 173 Since humans propagate themselves, the clans might be supposed to be further and further removed from their founder, and the living representatives of a clan to become wider and wider separated in lineage structure. However, we do not believe that this is the case. In theory every man is a potential founder of a lineage, but, in fact, lineages spring from very few

names. The others, for one reason or another, drop out, so that 613
only certain lines of descent are remembered. Also, in those 614
lines that persist names drop out of the steps in ascent to the
founder of the clan, so that the distance in generations from 173
the founder of a clan to the present day remain fairly constant. We have suggested in our discussion on Nuer time-reckoning that there is always this difference between a true genealogy and a genealogy which Nuer deem to be true. The evidence for the assertion depends partly on a comparative study of East African genealogies and partly on a study of Nuer genealogies. We mention some of the reasons, arising from reflections on Nuer genealogies, that have led us to this conclusion, since the validity of some arguments, developed later in the chapter, depends on their acceptance.

(1) All the main clans have about ten to twelve generations from the present day to the ancestors who gave rise to them. There is no reason to suppose that the Nuer came into existence ten to twelve generations ago. (2) When a Nuer is asked his lineage he gives it by reference to an ancestor, the founder of his minimal lineage, who is from three to six, generally four to five, steps in ascent from the present day. These steps are certain and agreed upon. This is understandable, since five steps represent a man, his father, his grandfather, and his grandfather's father and grandfather, and since a man instructs his children in the names of his immediate forbears. It is evident that after five or six generations the names of ancestors become lost. Young men often do not know them, and there is frequent confusion and disagreement among older persons. The founder of the minor lineage must be placed somewhere between the founder of the minimal lineage and the founder of the major lineage; the founder of the major lineage must be placed somewhere between the founder of the minor lineage and the founder of the maximal lineage; and the founder of the maximal lineage must be placed somewhere between the founder of the major lineage and the founder of the clan. The names of these founders of lineage-branches must go into the line of ascent somewhere, and in a definite order, because they are significant points of reference. It is immaterial whether other names go in or not, and their order is without significance. Consequently some informants put them in and some leave them out, and some put them in one order and others in a different order. It is evident, moreover, that since the minimal lineage consists of four or five actual steps in ascent, there has been telescoping of the agnatic

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line from the founder of the minimal lineage further up the line of ascent to the founder of the clan, for the founder of the minimal lineage was himself the extremity of another minimal lineage which has, by increase in generations, become the minor lineage, and so on. Consequently, even were the supposed founder of the clan the real founder of it, there ought to be at least sixteen steps from him to the present day, assuming that minimal lineages have always been of the same character as at the present time. The length of each fork in the tree of descent ought logically to be of equal length, whereas the twig, so to speak, is longer than the branch or stem from which it springs. (3) There is another way in which only significant ancestors, i.e. ancestors who form the apex of a triangle of descent, are denoted in genealogical trees, and irrelevant ancestors, i.e. ancestors who do not give their name to a group of descendants, are obscured and finally forgotten. Not only do links drop out of the direct line of descent, but also collateral lines merge. It is clear from a study of Nuer genealogies that the descendants of one or two brothers become numerous and dominant, that the descendants of others die out, and that the descendants of yet others are relatively few and weak and attach themselves, as is explained in later sections, by participation in local and corporate life, to a stronger and dominant collateral line. They become assimilated to this line in ordinary lineage reference and eventually are grafted on to it by misplacement of their founder, who becomes a son instead of a brother of its founder. The merging of collateral lines higher up a lineage seems to be common, and to be more frequent and necessary the higher up one proceeds. It is necessary because, as will be seen later, the lineage system provides one of the principles of political organization.

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The structural form of clans remains constant, while actual lineages at any point in time are highly dynamic, creating new bifurcations and merging old ones. They may therefore be presented as trees. But a presentation more useful for sociological analysis is in terms of structural distance, for lineages are groups of living agnates, and the distance between them varies with their relative positions in clan structure. Thus, in the diagram below, the line A–B represents the JINACA clan. The agnatic distance between the MAR minimal lineage and other lineages of the same clan is represented both on the line A–B and also in its time depth by their point of convergence in ascent on the line B–C. The wider the range of agnation specified the further back their point of convergence, so that

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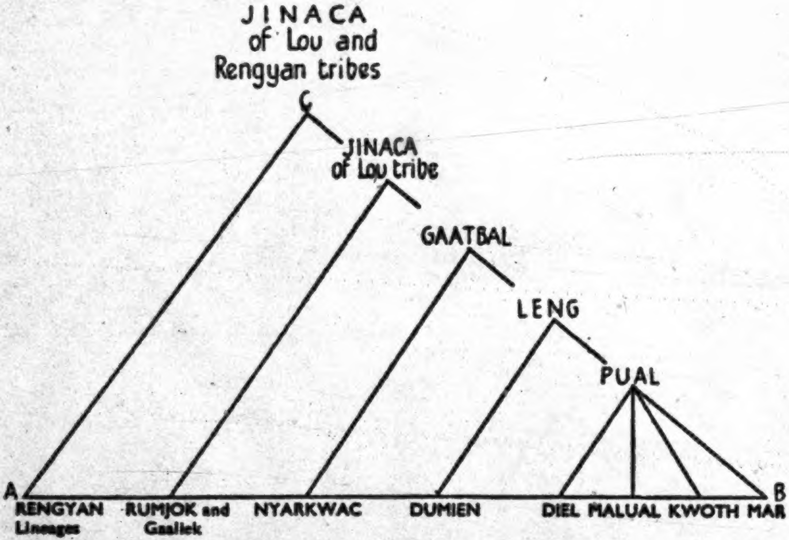
the depth of a lineage (the vertical line of ascent) is always in proportion to its width (the base line representing living lineage groups in the clan system).

A Nuer clan, therefore, is a system of lineages, the relationship of each lineage to every other lineage being marked in its structure by a point of reference in ascent. The distance to this point is what we call the time depth of a lineage. In theory the genealogical relationship between any two clansmen can be traced through this point, and Nuer can actually trace it if they take the trouble. However, they do not consider it necessary to know the exact genealogical relationship between persons who are known to be distantly related by membership of their respective lineages. Thus it is sufficient for a man of the GAATBAL lineage to know that another man is of the GAALIEK lineage without his having to know the man's exact descent, for these two lineages stand to one another in a certain structural relationship, and therefore the two men stand to one another at that distance. Nuer are conversant up to a point—generally up to the founders of their minimal and minor lineages—with the full range of their genealogical relationships. Beyond this point they reckon kinship in terms of lineages. It is necessary


JINACA
of Lou and
Rengyan tribes
C
JINACA
of Lou tribe
GAATBAL
LENG
PUAL
A
B
RENGYAN
Lineages
RUMJOK and
Gaaliek
NYARKWAC
DUMIEN
DIEL
MALUAL
KWOTH
MAR

● 613
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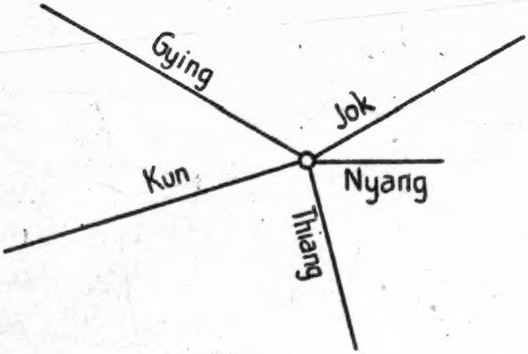
for a Nuer to know not only that a man is a fellow clansman, but also to know what lineage he belongs to, in deciding questions of exogamy and ceremonial. The relationship between a lineage and others of the same clan is not an equal relationship, for lineages are structurally differentiated units which stand to one another at different and exact structural distances.



It is interesting to note how the Nuer themselves figure a lineage system. When illustrating on the ground a number of related lineages they do not present them the way we figure them in this chapter as a series of bifurcations of descent, as a tree of descent, or as a series of triangles of ascent, but as a number of lines running at angles from a common point. Thus in Western Nuerland a man illustrated some of the GAATGANKIIR lineages, using the names of their founders, by drawing the figure above on the ground. This representation and Nuer comments on it show several significant facts about the way in which Nuer see the system. They see it primarily as actual relations between groups of kinsmen within local communities rather than as a tree of descent, for the persons after whom the lineages are called do not all proceed from a single individual. Jok, Thiang, and Kun are three sons of Kir and founders of the maximal lineages GAAJOK, GAAJAK, and GAAGWONG of the GAATGANKIIR clan. Thiang and Kun are shown next to each other because jointly they form the lineage framework of the Gaajak tribe. The Gying lineage does not belong to the GAATGANKIIR clan, but it is shown next to Kun because of the proximity of the Reng section, of which it forms part, to the

Gaagwong section. Nyang is shown as a short line at the side of Jok because, although the lineage which springs from him belongs to the group of lineages founded by Thiang, they live in the Gaagwang tribe together with a lineage descended from Jok, and the Gaagwang tribe is closely associated with the Gaajok tribe. The Nuer, outside certain ritual situations, evaluate clans and lineages in terms of their local relations. Herein lies the importance of these groups for this study. 613 614

IV

Nuer lineages are not corporate, localized, communities, though they are frequently associated with territorial units, and those members of a lineage who live in an area associated with it see themselves as a residential group, and the value, or concept, of lineage thus functions through the political system. Every Nuer village is associated with a lineage, and, though the members of it often constitute only a small proportion of the village population, the village community is identified with them in such a way that we may speak of it as an aggregate of persons clustered around an agnatic nucleus. The aggregate is linguistically identified with the nucleus by the common designation of the village community by the name of the lineage. It is only in reference to rules of exogamy, certain ritual activities, and to a very limited extent to responsibility for homicide, that one needs to regard lineages as completely autonomous groups. In social life generally they function within local communities, of all sizes from the village to the tribe, and as part of them. 613 621

A Nuer rarely talks about his lineage as distinct from his community, and in contrast to other lineages which form part of it, outside a ceremonial context. I have watched a Nuer who knew precisely what I wanted, trying on my behalf to discover from a stranger the name of his lineage. He often found great initial difficulty in making the man understand the information required of him, for Nuer think generally in terms of local divisions and of the relations between them, and an attempt to discover lineage affiliations apart from their community relations, and outside a ceremonial context, generally led to misunderstanding in the opening stages of an inquiry.

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I must here again refer to the term *cieng*, which has been a source of confusion in Nuer studies. A Nuer does not normally say that he is a man of such-and-such a *thok dwiel* (lineage) when he denotes his social position, but says that he is a man of a certain local community, *cieng*. Thus he says he is a man of *cieng* Mar, *cieng* Pual, *cieng* Leng, *cieng* Gaatbal, and so on (see diagram on p. 196).‡ What he is telling you is that he is a member of a group of people who live together in a village or district or tribal section. In ordinary situations of social life it is irrelevant whether he is, or is not, a member of the lineages from which these local communities derive their names. Moreover, since in ordinary speech a lineage-name has a local rather than a strict kinship connotation, those who share community life with the members of the lineage speak of themselves as though they also were members of it, because politically they are identified with it. Thus the word *cieng* is often used in an ambiguous sense which leaves lineage affiliation uncertain, since it is irrelevant, and it may, in consequence, be difficult, without much probing, to discover to what lineage a man belongs.

A *cieng*, in the sense of 'homestead', is called after the man who owns it, e.g. the homestead of Rainen is called '*cieng* Rainen'. When Rainen is dead and his sons and younger brothers and nephews live in his home they may call the hamlet after him, and it will be said that they are all members of *cieng* Rainen. If Rainen was an important man, and proves to have been the begetter of a strong line of descent, the whole village wherein live his agnatic heirs, and strangers who have intermarried with them or in other ways become attached to them, may thus become known as '*cieng Rainen*'. In course of time his descendants multiply and constitute the nucleus of a tribal section which is called '*cieng* Rainen'. Hence it has come about that many tribal sections are called after persons, e.g. *cieng* Minyaal, *cieng* Dumien, *cieng* Wangkac, &c. A lineage thus becomes identified in speech with the territory it occupies; the district occupied by the major lineage of WANGKAC, for example, being known as *cieng* Wangkac. A Nuer then talks about the local community and the lineage which is its political nucleus as interchangeable terms. He even speaks of *cieng* WANGKAC when he means the WANGKAC lineage. This habit confuses a European, since the WANGKAC lineage and the people who live in the Wangkac section are by no means the same.

If you ask a Lou man what is his *cieng* you are asking him where he lives, what is his village, or district. Suppose that he replies that his *cieng* is *cieng* Pual. You can then ask him what his *cieng* forms part of, and he will tell you that it is a part of *cieng* Leng,

‡ [See cat. 116,—Analyst]

giving the name of a tertiary tribal section. If you continue to 613
interrogate him he will inform you that *cieng* Leng is part of *cieng*
Gaatbal, a secondary tribal section, and that *cieng* Gaatbal is a 621
division of the Gun primary section of the Lou tribe. But he has told you nothing about his clan affiliation. He may or may not be a member of the PUAL lineage, which forms part of the LENG lineage, which forms part of the GAATBAL lineage, which is part of the clan of JINACA or GAATGANNACA, the people of Nac or the children of the children of Nac. In the same way, if a Jikany man tells you that he belongs to *cieng* Kwith of the Gaajok it does not follow that he is descended from Kwe (Kwith) who is descended from Jok the founder of the GAAJOK lineage of the GAATGANKIIR clan, the children of the children of Kir. He may merely mean that he lives in a tribal section occupied by the KWITH lineage of this clan. But these men will not tell you that they are not members of the dominant lineages in these sections, and will allow you to assume that they are, for in community relations there is a degree of linguistic assimilation of all residents other than members of the dominant lineage to that lineage, and people do not wish the fact that they are strangers in the tribal area to be publicly stressed, especially if they are of Dinka origin.

The assimilation of community ties to lineage structure, the expression of territorial affiliation in a lineage idiom, and the expression of lineage affiliation in terms of territorial attachments, is what makes the lineage system so significant for a study of political organization.

V

In emphasizing the relations between lineages and local com- 613
munities we speak mainly of those lineages which are segments
of the dominant clans in the different tribes. It is these which 619
have the greater political importance. We speak of them more fully in later sections. Here we give a preliminary account of how they are associated with tribal segments and how they act in those segments as a framework of the political structure.

The two diagrams which follow show the main lineages of the dominant clans among the Lou and Eastern Jikany tribes and the larger tribal sections in which they are dominant. The lines of descent are traced only as far as is necessary to illustrate the argument which follows. They may be compared with the trees

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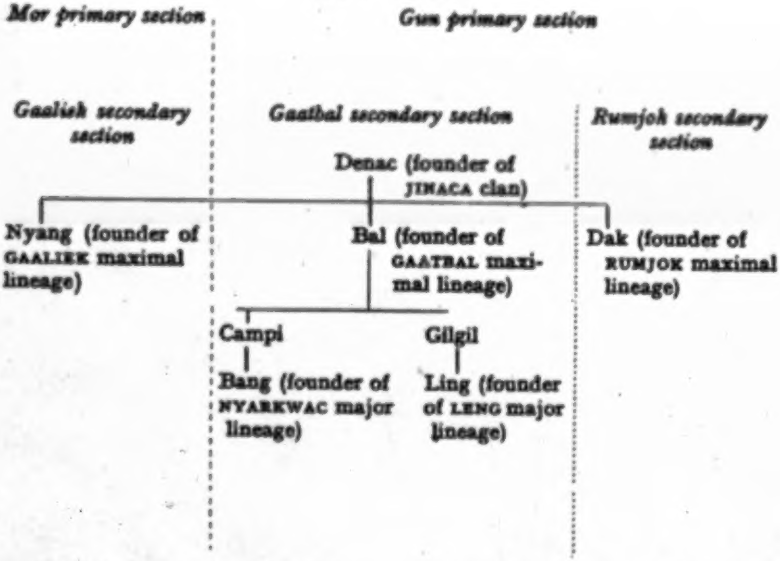
of descent of the two clans[1], and with the maps on pp. 56 and 58, which show the distribution of the sections of the two tribes.

LOU TRIBE


Mor primary section
Gun primary section
Gaaliek secondary section
Gaatbal secondary section
Rumjok secondary section
Denac (founder of JINACA clan)
Nyang (founder of GAALIEK maximal lineage)
Bal (founder of GAATBAL maximal lineage)
Dak (founder of RUMJOK maximal lineage)
Campi
Gilgil
Bang (founder of NYARKWAC major lineage)
Ling (founder of LENG major lineage)

In the Lou tribe it will be seen that the descendants of Nyang, son of Denac, form the nucleus of the Gaaliek secondary section; that the descendants of Bal, another of his sons, form the nucleus of the Gaatbal secondary section, and that the descendants of Dak, his third son, form the nucleus of the Rumjok secondary section. The sections shown in the map, which are not accounted for in the genealogical tree, are the Jimac and the Jaajoah sections, which have clan nuclei of foreign origin. It must be made clear that when a tribal section is called after a lineage it does not mean that all members of the lineage live in it, though probably most of them do, and it certainly does not mean that they alone live in it, for investigations show that they form only a small minority in the total population of the section. Large stranger lineages are included in the area designated by a title taken from any of the sons of Denac, e.g. the THIANG lineage in the Gaatbal primary section. Also there are innumerable small lineages of Nuer strangers and of Dinka clustered around lineages of GAATNACA descent. Thus, if one visits the villages and cattle camps called after lineages which spring from the GAALIEK maximal lineage, e.g. the lineages of JAANYEN and KUOK, one will find them occupied by a relatively small number of persons of these lineages,

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[1] [See pp. 196-97, Cat. 116 — Analyst]

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while most of the residents will be found to have sprung from other Nuer and Dinka clans. Thus, at the cattle camp at Muot Dit in 1930 there were not only various minimal lineages of the RUE branch of the RUMJOK maximal lineage of the GAATNACA clan, the 'owners' of the site, but also a KAANG lineage from Lang country, a KAN lineage from Bul country, a KONG lineage from Lang country, all segments of clans dominant to the west of the Nile, and many Dinka lineages. Likewise at the village of Parkur in Leek country in 1930 hamlets were occupied by a NYAPIR lineage of the dominant GAATBOL clan, a CUOR lineage of Dinka which has close association with the JIKUL clan, a GENG lineage from Beegh country, a RUAL lineage from Bul country, a KWACUKUNA lineage of the JIMEM clan, and other lineages.

The descendants of Jok[1]–Kir form the aristocratic nucleus of the Gaajok tribe; the descendants of Thiang[2]–Kir and Kun–Kir form the aristocratic nucleus of the Gaajak tribe; and the descendants of Gwang–Jok and Nyang–Thiang together form the aristocratic nucleus of the Gaagwang tribe. On the map on p. 58 the names of these lineages figure as tribal sections, for they have given their names to the areas in which they are dominant. Thus the names of three major lineages descended from Jok, LAANG, YOL, and WANGKAC appear on the map as Laang, Yol, and Wangkac. None of the foreign lineages is of sufficient size to give its name to a large tribal division, though they give their names to small sections and villages.[3] Here again, it must not be supposed that the descendants of Jok form more than a fragment of the Gaajok tribe. In the same way the Gaagwang tribe comprises many foreign elements which probably far outnumber the descendants of Nyang–Thiang and Gwang–Jok. The same applies to the Gaajak tribe. The GAAGWONG lineage is so closely associated with the GAAJAK lineage in tribal life that they form together a twin nucleus of the Gaajak tribe. The secondary sections of Lony, Kang, and Tar, shown on the map, are all called after lineages which spring from Thiang–Kir. Likewise the secondary sections of Nyayan, Cany, and Wau are all called after lineages which spring from Kun–Kir. Hence the only section in the map not accounted for

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[1] Also called Majok.

[2] Also called Mathiang.

[3] Village-names are generally place-names and not names of lineages, but one may refer to the communities by the names of their chief lineages. It often happens that these lineages are of stranger or Dinka descent, and though the communities may be referred to by their names, it is recognized that the sites belong to lineages of the dominant clan of the tribe. Hence a village may be associated with two lineages. Thus tne JUAK, NGWOL, &c., of the Leek tribe are stranger or Dinka lineages after whom village communities are called, but the sites are the land of the KEUNYANG lineage, and they alone are *diel* in them.

[p.208 contains no textual material]

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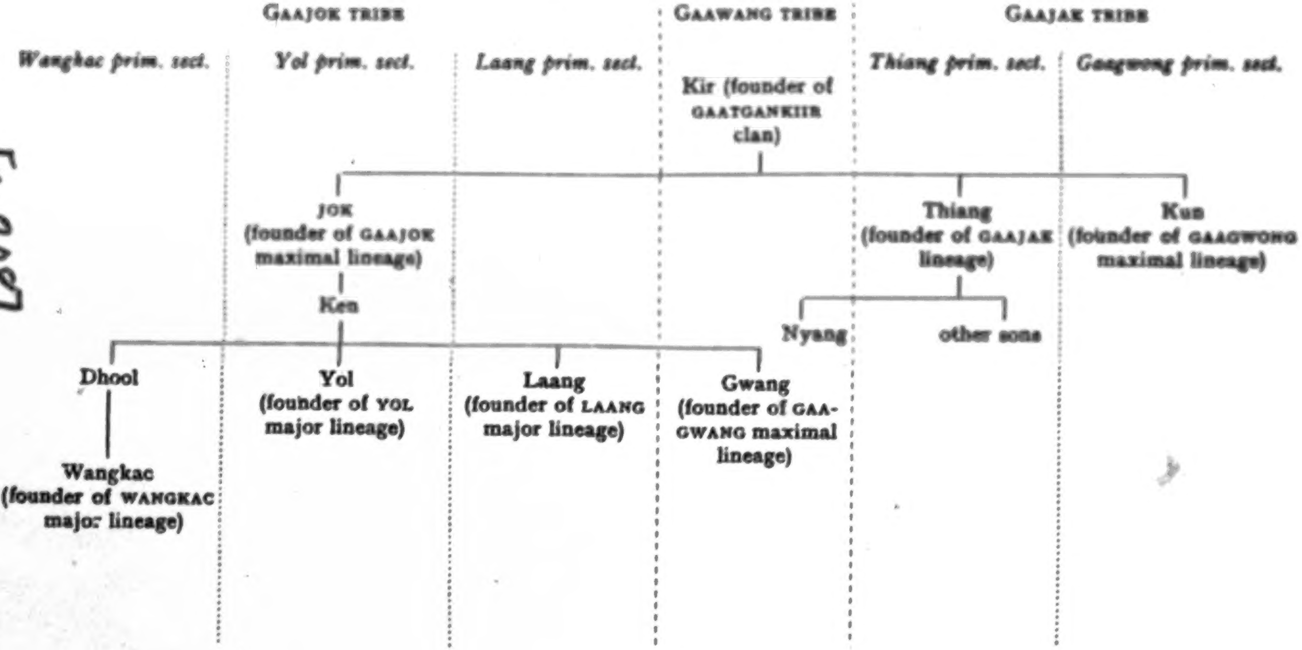
[p.208]

JIKANY TRIBES


GAAJOK TRIBE
GAAWANG TRIBE
GAAJAK TRIBE
Wanghac prim. sect.
Yol prim. sect.
Laang prim. sect.
Thiang prim. sect.
Gaagwong prim. sect.
Kir (founder of GAATGANKIIR clan)
JOK (founder of GAAJOK maximal lineage)
Ken
Thiang (founder of GAAJAK lineage)
Kun (founder of GAAGWONG maximal lineage)
Nyang
other sons
Dhool
Wangkac (founder of WANGKAC major lineage)
Yol (founder of YOL major lineage)
Laang (founder of LAANG major lineage)
Gwang (founder of GAA-GWANG maximal lineage)

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in the diagram is the primary section of Reng, the Kong and Dhilleak divisions of which have clan nuclei of different origin to the other sections. 619

In all these tribes and tribal sections there is much admixture of lineages in communities. The same conditions are found in the Zeraf valley and also, and perhaps to a larger degree, in Western Nuerland. Nuer say that feuds and quarrels between lineages chiefly led to their dispersal, and they can cite many examples. Thus the descendants of Nyang-Thiang left the other sons of Thiang and joined the people with whom they form the Gaagwang tribe, and the NYARUNY lineage left their kinsmen of the Thiang primary section and joined the Reng primary section of the Gaajak tribe. After fights, a whole community, led by its dominant lineage, may in this way move to a different section or tribe and take up permanent residence with them. Migration led to further dispersal, since some lineages remained in the homeland to the west of the Nile and others crossed the Nile and Zeraf and settled to the east of these rivers. Nuer say that in the earliest stages of the migration the warriors used to raid Dinka and return home to their kinsmen after each raid. Then they settled to the east, but kept in close contact with the people of their lineage to the west. But as they shifted farther away the contact lessened and finally, in most cases, ceased altogether. When lineages migrated they must already have been nuclei of heterogeneous accretions and not exclusive groups of agnates: but admixture was no doubt hastened and made more complete by movement. 613 619 166

Two factors other than migration, quarrels, intermarriage, &c., have probably contributed to the dispersal of lineages. The Nuer are mainly a pastoral people with dominant pastoral interests and do not feel themselves bound by economic necessity or by ritual ties to any particular spot. Where his cattle are is the Nuer's home; his hearth is the droppings of his cattle and his altar a light pole (*riek*) which he plants wherever he may wander. The spirits which give him protection and the ancestral ghosts that watch over his welfare are no more bound to the soil than he is and they are present wherever are the herds. Beasts dedicated to ghosts and spirits are his wandering shrines. Also the Nuer have no organized cult of ancestral ghosts. The dead 181 771 769

769 are buried quickly and crudely in unvisited and unremembered
tombs; only in very rare cases are sacrifices offered to them;
and there are no sacred places associated with them.

Thus Nuer have always felt themselves free to wander as they
[181] pleased, and if a man is unhappy, his family sick, his herds declining,
613 his garden exhausted, his relations with some of his
593 neighbours uncongenial, or merely if he is restless, he moves to
a different part of the country and resides with some kinsmen.
607 It is seldom that a man goes alone, for brothers are a corporate
601 group and, especially if they are sons of one mother, stick together.
So, frequently as a result of quarrels, a group of brothers will often leave a village and settle elsewhere. Nuer say that they usually make for the home of a married sister, where they are certain to be well received. Here they are respected as *jiciengthu*, in-laws, and their children accepted as *gaat nār*, children of the mother's brother, while the people they join are to them *cieng conyimar*, the people of my sister's husband, and *gaat nyal*, children of a female agnate, and *gaat waca*, children of the father's sister. A man who changes his residence thus becomes a member of a different community and enters into intimate relations with the dominant lineage of that community. When a GAATIEK man said to me, 'Now that I have come to settle in *Cieng* Kwoth I am a man of *Cieng* Kwoth', he meant that outside ceremonial situations he identified himself with the KWOTH lineage rather than with his own.

Even one man is a potential lineage and several brothers even
613 more so. A minimal, and then a minor, lineage comes into being
621 which has only ritual status towards the other lineages of its
clan, whereas with the people in whose village and district its members have grown up it has a mutuality of interests and a community of experience. The group thus develops into a distinct lineage. It intermarries with the other people of its home and very often it intermarries so frequently with the dominant lineage of the district that further marriage between them becomes impossible without breaking incest regulations. In this way lineages twine around one another and a texture of cognatic relationships unites all members of the community. Only a few such lineages establish themselves and survive as lineages. Many either die out or lose much of their individuality

613 621 and become attached to larger and stronger lineages by processes which we will explain later.

613 621 614 [582] Nevertheless, a Nuer lineage never entirely merges into another clan. There are always certain ritual observances which cannot be shared. If intermarriage creates community ties between two lineages, it likewise keeps them distinct, since one may only marry those who are not of one's agnatic group, and even if two lineages intermarry to such an extent that cognatic relationship is a bar to further marriage between them, then each may marry into collateral lineages of the other's clan and children of their daughters. If a mythological link forges a closer union between them it is also a record of their different lines of descent, explaining, indeed, how people of divergent descent are living together amicably. Thus a lineage, however far removed from its homeland and however widely separated from its kinsfolk, never becomes entirely absorbed or loses its ritual heritage. A lineage can only merge with a collateral lineage of the same clan.

But though lineages maintain their autonomy, the lineage value only operates in the restricted field of ceremonial and is, therefore, only occasionally a determinant of behaviour. Community values are those which constantly direct behaviour, and these operate in a different set of social situations to lineage values. While lineage values control ceremonial relations between groups of agnates, community values control political relations between groups of people living in separate villages, tribal sections, and tribes. The two kinds of value control distinct planes of social life.

It is, as we explain in the following sections, only the close association between a tribe and its dominant clan, and lineages in one way or another related to this dominant clan, that makes the agnatic principle in lineage structure politically important, for these lineages function as values in the political system which gives them corporate substance.

VI

614 619 In spite of so much dispersion and admixture of clans there is in every tribe a definite relation between its political structure and the clan system, for in each tribe a clan, or a maximal lineage

619 At a cursory glance, I gathered that conditions were elsewhere
the same in western Nuerland, except, perhaps, among the
565 Jikany where the status of *diel* may be more enhanced. Among
554 the Eastern Jikany one finds the greatest insistence on social
differentiation and legal privilege. The category of *diel* tends to
be more stressed in the larger tribes than in the smaller, and
when its structural function has been examined it will be understood why this is so.

613 In a Nuer village or cattle camp there are seldom more than
621 a few families of *diel*. Most people are either *rul*, Nuer of other
clans, or *jaang*, persons of Dinka descent who have not been
563 adopted into Nuer lineages. A *rul* is a Nuer who in a certain
565 tribe is not a *dil*, though he may be a *dil* in another tribe. I have
already described how lineages split off from their localized kinship groups, wander, join persons of other clans, and become members of a new community. This process was well described to me by a man of the Dok tribe. Members of a lineage beget children and they become numerous and spread over the countryside, wandering here, there, and everywhere. Then their close relationship ends and they go to live in the midst of other clans who are distantly related to them. Here they dwell as friends and slowly forge new cognatic relationships by intermarriage. Hence lineages are much mixed in all local communities.

613 Also Nuer say that no *dil* dwells in a social milieu composed
entirely of fellow aristocrats, for lineages of *diel* split up and
565 segments seek autonomy by becoming the nuclei of new social
554 agglomerations in which they are the aristocratic element. Thus
lineages of *diel* split up not only on account of internal dissension, but because a man of personality likes to found his independent settlement where he will be an important person rather than remain a younger brother in a group of influential elder relatives. I was told that this process by which any man, especially a *dil*, could become a local leader is felt to be ingrained in their social system and is a reason why they object to the creation by the Government of a few local 'chiefs' whose position tends to become formalized, permanent, and hereditary. To them this is a rigid interpretation of status, based on territorial rather than personal qualifications, which stabilizes the superiority of a single man or lineage. Every man of standing feels that

613 565 554 he should be a 'chief'. It does not follow that a man must be an aristocrat to gain influence among his fellow villagers. He may be a *tut* of some other lineage than the dominant one of his tribe who, by outstanding character, has been able to establish himself and his kin as social leaders in his locality.

There is thus in every tribe some differentiation of status, but the people so differentiated do not constitute classes, and 'strangers' and 'Dinka' are properly to be regarded as categories rather than as groups. Their relation to the aristocrats in the tribal system and the ways in which the different elements are integrated into communities will engage our attention in later sections.

VII

565 628 681 563 It is only in assessment of blood-cattle that social differentiation between aristocrats and Nuer strangers is of great significance, and then only among the Jikany tribes, principally among the Eastern Jikany. Among the Eastern Jikany the kinsmen of a *dil*, aristocrat, who was killed had to be compensated by payment of more cattle than the kinsmen of a slain *rul*, stranger, or *jaang*, Dinka. It is not easy to know to what extent this privilege could be enforced, or even to discover the relative assessments of blood-cattle. There was undoubtedly considerable elasticity in reckoning who counted as equivalent to a *dil* in situations of homicide and variation in the number of cattle paid for homicide. It was asserted by several informants that in pre-government days a true Nuer, called in the Jikany tribes a *gat Geeka*, counted the same as a *dil* Jikany for purposes of assessing blood-cattle, and I was given the following blood-cattle assessments: a Jikany aristocrat, 40, a Nuer stranger, 40, a Dinka adopted by a Jikany aristocrat, 20, a Dinka who had been adopted by a Nuer stranger, 20, and an unadopted Dinka, 6. In more recent practice the following payments seem to have been regarded as usual: a Jikany aristocrat, 20, a Nuer stranger, 17, a Dinka who has settled permanently in the country, 16, a Dinka who has not been long settled, 10.

I was not long enough among the Eastern Jikany to investigate this matter thoroughly, but I received the impression that the second list was coloured in its variation of assessment, as it was certainly influenced in amounts of assessment, by recent Government decisions; though the informants who gave it insisted that it was in proportion to the ancient assessments. Aristocrats assured me that in the past more cattle were always paid for the homicide of an aristocrat than for that of a Nuer stranger. Members an examination of adoption. A Nuer cannot be adopted into a lineage other than that into which he is born, so that the custom concerns only Dinka. 597 563 619

We have already described how Nuer scorn Dinka and persistently raid them, but they do not treat those Dinka who are permanent members of their community differently from its Nuer members, and we have seen that persons of Dinka descent form probably at least half the population of most tribes. These Dinka are either children of captives and immigrants who have been brought up as Nuer, or are themselves captives and immigrants who are residing permanently among Nuer. They are '*Jaang-Nath*', 'Dinka-Nuer', and, it is said, '*caa Nath*', 'they have become Nuer'. As we have explained, once their membership of a community is recognized, in most of Nuerland, their legal status is the same as that of a free-born Nuer, and it is only in relation to ritual and rules of exogamy that attention is drawn to their origin. In structural relations of a political kind they are undifferentiated members of a segment. Although in his domestic and kinship relations a Dinka has not so strong a position as a Nuer, because he has not the same range of kinship links, I have never observed that they suffer any serious disabilities, far less degradation. In answer to my question whether a captured Dinka would not work harder in the kraal than a son of the family, I was told that he was a son and would enjoy the same privileges as the other sons, being given an ox by his father at initiation and, later, bride-cattle for a wife. The only foreigners who suffer serious social inequality are certain small pockets of Dinka and Anuak who have been conquered but not absorbed into Nuer society and culture. Such pockets, like the Balak Dinka and the Anuak on the Sobat river, enjoy neither the privileges of Nuer citizenship nor the freedom of foreigners. Such pockets do not truly constitute part of a Nuer tribe.

Captured Dinka boys are almost invariably incorporated into the lineage of their Nuer captors by the rite of adoption, and they then rank as sons in lineage structure as well as in family relations, and when the daughters of that lineage are married they receive bride-cattle. A Dinka boy is brought up as a child of his captor's household. He is already incorporated into the family and joint family by his acceptance as a member of these 597 613

597 • 613 groups by their other members and by outsiders. People say '*caa dil e cieng*' or '*caa ran wec*', 'he has become a member of the community', and they say of the man who captured him that 'he has become his father', and of his sons that 'they have become his brothers'. He is already a member of the *gol*, the household and joint family. Adoption gives him a position in lineage structure, and thereby ceremonial status, for by adoption he becomes a member of his captor's *thoh dwiel*, lineage.

597 788 I was told that the captor will seldom himself give the lad *buth*, agnatic affiliation to his lineage, and that the rite is usually performed by a kinsman at the request of his sons and with the consent of their minimal lineage. A representative of the lineage invites the Dinka, now grown-up and initiated, to attend the sacrifice of an ox or sheep in his kraal. The head of the joint family provides the sacrificial beast and the representative of the lineage drives the tethering-peg into the earth at the entrance to the byre and walks up and down the kraal invoking the spear-name of the clan and calling on the spirits and ancestral ghosts of the lineage to take note that the Dinka is now a member of it and under their protection. He then spears the beast and the Dinka is smeared with the undigested contents of its stomach while the ghosts and spirits are asked to accept him. He is especially smeared on the soles of his feet, for this binds him to his new home. If he leaves it he will die. The beast is then cut up, and a son of the house, or the representative of the lineage, and his new brother divide the skin and the scrotum, which the Dinka cuts. The Dinka also takes the neck as his portion. On all future occasions when animals are sacrificed by members of the lineage the Dinka will receive his share of the meat, for he is now a member of the lineage. The cutting of the scrotum is the symbolic act which makes the man a member of the lineage, because only an agnatic relative may cut the scrotum of a sacrificial beast. 'A man who has cut the scrotum of your beast, if he has sexual relations with your daughter, he will die.'

613 597 [583] A girl captive is not adopted into the lineage, but people say '*caa lath cungni*', 'she is given a right to receive bride-wealth'. 'Her children are become people who partake in the bride-cattle'. This means that when she is married, or her daughters are married, the sons of the family in which she has been brought up will receive the cattle due to brothers and maternal uncles, and that in return, when the daughters of the sons and daughters of this family are married, she, or her sons, can claim the cow due to the paternal aunt and the cow due to the maternal aunt. She has become a daughter to her captor and a sister to his sons, but she is not a member of their lineage.

613 597 By adoption Dinka men are grafted on to the lineage of their captors. They trace their ascent up the lineage to its ancestor and they become a new point of its growth. The fusion is complete and final. The spirits of the lineage become their spirits, its ghosts become their ghosts, and its spear-name and honorific name become their symbols. Indeed it is almost impossible without a prolonged stay in a Nuer village or camp to discover who are and who are not of pure Nuer origin. I have for weeks considered men to be true Nuer, whereas they were descended from captured Dinka, for a man whose Dinka grandfather had been adopted into a Nuer lineage regards himself as being just as much a member of the lineage as the man whose grandfather adopted his grandsire, and he is so regarded by other members of the lineage and by persons not of it. Thus, when a man gives his descent from E through D and C, and another man gives his descent from E through J and K, one naturally assumed that D and J were sons of E. There is no means of knowing that, in fact, J was a captured Dinka who was adopted into the lineage, unless someone volunteers the information—a most unlikely happening in Nuerland. Moreover, it is impolite to ask strangers whether their grandfathers were captured Dinka, and, even if they were of Dinka origin, they would not readily say so. One can, of course, always ask other people; but only those who are members of the same lineage are likely to be fully acquainted with the man's ancestry, and they, in all probability, will not tell one if he is of Dinka origin, for he is their agnatic kinsman as far as outsiders are concerned.

563 609 A very large number of Dinka in all tribes have been incorporated by adoption into Nuer lineages. Since, as mentioned later, adopted Dinka and their descendants can marry into collateral lineages, it would not be accurate to say that they are adopted into clans. Probably most captured Dinka were adopted into Nuer lineages, but there are also many Dinka lineages descended from men who came of their own free will to settle in Nuerland, either to escape famine, largely caused by Nuer raiding, in their own country, to visit captured sisters, or to reoccupy the sites from which Nuer raids had ousted them. Such immigrants were unmolested and were permitted to settle or return to Dinkaland as they might choose. A Dinka who decided to settle

582 602 621 can be placed on a single genealogical chart showing lines of descent and affinity, and, since affinity is fundamentally a relationship through kinship, we may say that all members of a village or camp are united by kinship ties and, therefore, are generally unable to marry into it. Consequently they are forced to take spouses from neighbouring villages of their district. Normally a man marries a girl who lives within visiting distance of his village. Hence a network of kinship ties stretches over a district and links in diverse ways the members of distinct political groups.

Looked at from the angle of a single village the circle of close kinship relations is limited to a small radius, and they tend to become fewer and more distant the nearer its periphery is approached. But the circumference of one such circle is intersected by other circles, so that there is no limit to the extension of a continuous series of kinship links. Exogamous rules, therefore, prevent the formation of autonomous agnatic groups and create extensive kinship ties within, and beyond, the tribal structure. Thus the kinship system bridges the gaps in political structure by a chain of links which unite members of opposed segments. They are like elastic bands which enable the political segments to fall apart and be in opposition and yet keep them together. This relation between kinship and political structure poses a set of complex problems. Here we wish to demonstrate only one point: the way in which dominant lineages serve as a political framework by the accretion of other lineages to them within local communities.

● 613 621 We have seen how every local community is associated with a lineage and that the members of this lineage who live in the community are numerically swamped by members of other lineages. We have also seen how all members of the community are in some way or other related by kinship. What gives a pattern to this complicated criss-crossing of cognatic threads is their relation to the dominant lineage of the community.

The Nuer have a category of *gaat nyiet*, children of girls, which includes all persons who are in the relationship of sister's son and daughter's son to a lineage. As a whole lineage can be spoken of as *gaat nyiet* to another if there is one such female link between them anywhere in the lines of their descent,

and as there must be such a link if they live in the same community, 613
owing to the rules of exogamy, it follows that people 621
who live together are all *gaat nyiet* to one another. However, it
is in relation to the dominant lineage of a community that the
concept is mainly employed and is politically important. When
people are not members of this lineage it is stressed that they
are *gaat nyiet* to it. Nuer of other clans can never more closely
identify themselves with the dominant lineage, because, for
ritual reasons, they must remain autonomous units, but
politically they accrete themselves to it through this kinship
category. Moreover, outside ritual situations, being *gaat nyiet*
to a dominant lineage gives people complete equality with it,
and their accretion to it is often expressed in terms of lineage
structure, so that a man will often give his ascent to the woman
of the dominant lineage who bore one of his ancestors, and thus
graft himself, through her, on to their tree of descent; though
this is more usually done by Dinka than by Nuer. It is, however,
the common practice for children of strangers who have
been brought up at the home of their maternal kinsmen, who
are aristocrats, to regard themselves as members of their
mother's lineage, except in ceremonial situations, and to
consider its members, rather than their father's lineage, as their
true kinsmen.

Dinka who have not been adopted commonly trace their 613
ascent to a female Nuer forebear and through her they graft
themselves into a Nuer lineage and are accepted as members of 621
it in ordinary social relations. Thus a Dinka often gives his 609
ascent to the dominant lineage of his community through a
woman, and sometimes through two or three female links, and
though this is generally evident from female prefixes it cannot
always be known. These Dinka individuals incorporate themselves
into the structure of a Nuer lineage through their mothers,
since they have no lineage structure of their own. This is [611]
different from the stressing of a female link (*gaat nyiet*) which
unites a group of Nuer strangers or of Dinka to the dominant
lineage of their tribal section and also from matrilineal modes of [591]
reckoning descent due to matrilocal conditions of residence, which
may be temporary.

Owing to exogamous rules lineages are thus linked by 613 621

613 innumerable cognatic ties, so that however many lineages there
621 may be in a local community their members are all related to one another by some kind of cognation and affinity. A lineage remains an exclusive agnatic group only in ritual situations. In other situations it is merged in the community, and cognation (*mar*) takes the place of lineage agnation (*buth*) as the value through which people living together express their relations to one another. The agnatic structure of the dominant lineage is not stressed in ordinary social relations, but only on a political plane where relations between territorial segments are concerned, for the assimilation of territorial segments to segments of the dominant lineage means that the interrelations of the one are expressed in terms of the other.

In every small tribal segment there is a lineage of the dominant clan of the tribe associated with it, and the members of the segment are joined to this lineage by adoption, cognatic kinship, or kinship fictions, in such a way that one may speak of them as an accretion around a lineage nucleus. As these different nuclei are lineages of the same clan, or, as we shall see in the next section, assimilated to it, the structure of the dominant clan is to the political system like the anatomical structure to the system of an organism.

X

000 We have seen how Dinka and strangers are linked to the framework of the dominant clan by adoption and cognation and how these links form an embracing kinship system which provides the non-political texture of the political system. Kinship values are the strongest sentiments and norms in Nuer society and all social interrelations tend to be expressed in a kinship idiom. Adoption and the assimilation of cognatic to agnatic ties are two ways in which community relations are translated into kinship relations: in which living together forces
608 residential relations into a kinship pattern. A third way is by
609 mythological creation of kinship fictions, and this way is appro-
563 priate to relations between dominant lineages and stranger and
773 Dinka groups, living with them in the same tribal segments, which are too large and occupy too distinct a territory for incorporation by either of the other two methods. It is the way

608 in which large pockets of strangers and Dinka are incorporated
609 into the conceptual scheme of a tribe.

563 It has frequently been emphasized that political relations
are often expressed in speech as lineage relations, in the sense
773 that one talks of a local community as though it were a lineage, thereby assimilating to a dominant lineage those who share the same community life with it; and that lineage relations are often expressed as political relations, in the sense that one talks of a lineage as though it were identical with the local community in which it is only a nucleus, thereby depriving the lineage of its unique agnatic status and giving it a general residential value. In conformity with this way of describing community interrelations, they are personified in myths and derived from personal relationships of a kinship kind.

● 613 We do not propose to give a collection of Nuer myths. We
773 have so far only mentioned one myth explaining group inter-
173 relations: that which tells why the Nuer raid the Dinka. There
are very few myths of this general kind. Most relate to clans and lineages in their corporate territorialized form and explain their association with one another as tribes and tribal segments, particularly the relations between dominant lineages and large stranger lineages living with them. We are not always able to explain mythological relations by the present-day political system, but this can often be done, and where we fail to do it we attribute our inability to ignorance, especially to ignorance of tribal history.

The two large Lou tribal sections, the Jimac and the Jaajoah which appear on the map on p. 56, but not on the clan tree of the JINACA, the dominant clan of the tribe, on p. 196, are divisions called after the JIMAC and JAAJOAH lineages. They are said to be *gaat nyiet*, children of daughters of the founder of the JINACA clan, and there is a myth accounting for this maternal link. Denac was said to have had, according to the Lou story, four sons, named Yin, Dak, Bal, and Bany, by one wife, and Nyang and two nameless brothers by a second wife. These wives are sometimes said to have been called Nyagun and Nyamor and the two primary sections of the tribe, Gun and Mor, to be named after them. Nyang's two brothers were eaten by an ogre. When, afterwards, the sons of Denac went fishing, the four sons of one mother went by themselves and Nyang by himself, for he would not accompany his half-

● 613 brothers, but pined for the sons of his mother. When he caught a fish someone would come and steal it from him, for he was all by
173 himself and only a boy. When he came home he would not sit with the other boys facing his father, but sat apart with his back to him,
T73 and when his father asked him why he was troubled he replied that he was thinking of his brothers whom the ogre had eaten. His father said to him, 'Never mind, take your two sisters and let them be your brothers.' So when Nyang went fishing he was accompanied by his sisters Nyabil and Fadwai. Nyang is the founder of the GAALIEK lineage, Nyabil of the JIMAC lineage, and Fadwai of the JAAJOAH lineage. These lineages together form the kinship framework of the Mor primary section of the Lou tribe and the myth explains their association. This maternal link has not prevented intermarriage between the GAALIEK and the JIMAC. Apart from questions of ritual and exogamy the descendants of Nyabil and Fadwai are treated as though these daughters had been sons, and they possess a mythological patent which gives them equal status in the tribe with the *diel*. In tracing their agnatic ascent members of these lineages do not go further back than their ancestress. From her they continue to her father, Denac.

In the Gaawar tribe there is an important JAKAR lineage which is mythologically attached to the GAAWAR, the aristocrats of the tribe, in the following manner. A man called Kar, or Jakar, descended from heaven by a rope that connected the sky with a tamarind tree, probably the tree in Lang country beneath which mankind is said to have been created. He was later followed by War, the founder of the GAAWAR clan, who was found sitting in the tree by Kar's sister who was gathering firewood accompanied by her dog. She returned to tell her brother that she had found a man whose head was covered in blood. Kar tried to persuade him to come to the village but he refused to do so. They then sacrificed an ox and roasted its flesh and the smell so attracted War, who was very greedy, that he climbed down the tree and entered the village. When he had eaten he wanted to return to heaven, but Kar cut the rope. Mr. B. A. Lewis has kindly furnished me with what he says is a less common version, found in the Gaawar tribe. War fell from heaven in a rainstorm and was discovered by a dog which belonged to Logh, but was with Kwec's wife when she was looking for wood in the forest and War was found. Kwec's wife took him home with her and a dispute arose between Kwec and Logh about the ownership of the foundling. Logh claimed War on the ground that it was his dog which had discovered him, and Kwec claimed him because his wife had found him. Then Kar joined in the discussion, saying that War was his brother.

This myth brings War and Kar and Logh into some kind of 613
relationship to one another and is to be explained by the fact that 773
the two main clans in the Gaawar tribe, next to the aristocratic
clan of the GAAWAR, are the JAKAR and the JALOGH. The JALOGH 173
are presumably the same clan as live to the south of Dok country where a small territory is named after them. Kwec was, doubtless, the founder of the KWEC lineage after whom a small territory, next to the Jalogh country, is named. We may surmise that, since both lineages are found in Gaawar country at the present day and in its present site to the east of the Nile, they also had close relations with the GAAWAR when all three clans lived in their homeland to the west of the Nile.

The richest clan mythology is that of the GAATGANKIIR, and it clearly illustrates the mythological integration of lineages of different origins to the dominant lineage system in a political structure, and shows how territorial relations are given a kinship value.

There are several versions of many of the incidents relating to Kir, the founder of the GAATGANKIIR clan, and we give an abridgement of one of these. A Dinka of the Ngok tribe, called Yul, saw a stalk of a gourd on a river bank and, having followed it a long way, arrived at a huge gourd. He cut this gourd open and out of it came Kir with various ritual objects. Yul's wife suckled the child as well as her own baby, Gying. When Kir grew up he turned out to be a witch and magician and the sons of Yul tried to kill him because his evil powers were destroying the cattle. Only Gying remained Kir's friend, and said to him, as he fled from Yul's home, that he would one day follow after him and join him.

In his flight Kir came to the Nile where he saw a man, called Tik, in the river and asked him for help. Tik struck the waters of the Nile and cut them in two and Kir crossed over to the west bank. Kir told Tik that when he had found a place to settle in Tik was to come after him. Tik accompanied Kir till they met a man of the Wot tribe who took them to his home where the JIDIET, the dominant clan of the Wot, sacrificed a black ox so that the lethal power of witchcraft might leave Kir's eyes and enable him to look at people and cattle without killing them. Kir then dug a hole for himself in a termite-mound near a cattle camp of the GAAWAR, where he performed many strange feats. Eventually the GAAWAR offered sacrifices and persuaded him to leave the mound and took him to their camp.

Kir was then given a wife, Nyakwini, who bore him Thiang before he killed her with his witchcraft. He then married Nyabor who bore him Kun. He likewise killed her. The people then gave him

613
773
173

a lame woman, Duany, who bore him Jok. In Lou and Eastern Jikany versions the three wives were all daughters of Gee, the founder of the GAATGANGEEKA family of clans, and in versions to the west of the Nile the first two were GAAWAR and Duany a NYAPIR of the Bul tribe, but all accounts make Nyakwini and Nyabor more closely related to one another than either to Duany. After Duany had borne Jok she killed Kir with witchcraft, for she, also, was a witch. Later Thiang, her dead husband's eldest son, cohabited with her and begat Nyang.

In all the variants of the Kir myth the parts played by Gying and Tik are stressed. Gying was suckled with him and afterwards joined him and lived with him as a brother. When Kir died his eldest sons Thiang and Kun possessed cattle, but the youngest son, Jok, and Gying had no cattle. Thiang wanted to prevent Gying from acquiring cattle, but Kun gave him some, so Thiang said that Kun and Gying were to live together. Tik had saved Kir's life and had gone to live with him. There is a further story of how Gying and Tik were threatened by an ogre and shared a hut together and became like brothers, so that the lineages descended from these two men do not intermarry.

Without recording further details we may note how actual political relations are mythologically represented in the characters of these stories. The two largest segments of the Gaajak tribe which are named after nuclei of strangers are the Kong section, the stranger nucleus of which is a lineage descended from Tik, and the Dhilleŋ section, the stranger nucleus of which is a lineage descended from Gying, and these two sections live together as parts of the Reng primary section (see diagram on p. 140, and sketch-map on p. 58). The myth tells also how Jok and Nyang are sons of the same mother, Duany, Jok being begotten by Kir and Nyang by Thiang. This is a mythological representation of the structure of the Gaagwang tribe which has dominant lineage nuclei descended from both Nyang and Jok, and also of the political relations between the Gaagwang tribe and the Gaajok tribe, for these relations, especially to the west of the Nile, are of close alliance compared to the more distant relations between the Gaagwang tribe and the primary sections of the Gaajak tribe that also border them, the Thiang and the Reng. Thiang and Kun were begotten by Kir and borne by women who are generally represented as sisters, and the sections in which their descendants are dominant are the Thiang and Gaagwong primary sections of the Gaajak tribe, the third primary section of which, the Reng, has nuclei descended from Thiang, Gying, and Tik, whose relationships in the myth have already been noted.

[p. 233 contains no textual material.]

● 613 773 173 In every Nuer tribe there are similar stories which explain the relations between the aristocratic clan and large stranger lineages living with it. Other myths explain the relations between these stranger lineages. Thus the lineages living at Nyueny and in neighbouring villages in Leek country, JUAK, NGWOL, JIKUL, &c., are all mythologically related to one another and to the dominant clan of the Leek tribe. These myths also explain the ritual symbols and observances of the lineages mentioned in them.

Actual interrelations of a political kind are thus explained and justified in mythological interrelations, and wherever, as far as we know, large lineages of different clans are politically associated there is a myth bringing their ancestors into some social relationship. This is especially the case between dominant lineages and stranger or Dinka lineages, and the mythological link gives them equality and fraternity in community life, while permitting ritual exclusiveness and intermarriage between them. Complete assimilation is impossible, for there must always be ritual distinction or the clan and lineage systems would collapse. Strangers have to be incorporated into the community of the dominant lineage and excluded from its agnatic structure.

XI

602 609 554 By adoption, the recognition of the equivalence of cognatic and agnatic ties in community life, and by mythological relationships, all persons in a tribal segment have kinship relationships of some kind to one another and the segments themselves are given a kinship relationship to each other within the political system. Although the categories of *diel*, *rul*, and *jaang* create social differentiation, it is on a ritual and domestic, rather than on a political, plane and is only indicated in certain situations of social life.

This is evident in the Nuer use of the three words denoting the three statuses. It is a common Nuer practice when addressing people and speaking publicly about them to use words which denote a closer relationship between them and the speaker than their actual relationship. This is commonly done with kinship terms and, also, in defining the status of a person in his tribe. Nuer do not emphasize that a man is a stranger or Dinka by

619 tribal chiefs and councils, or any other form of tribal government,
we have to seek elsewhere for the organizing principle
614 within the structure which gives it conceptual consistency and
565 a certain measure of actual cohesion, and we find it in aristocratic
status. In the absence of political institutions providing
central administration in a tribe and co-ordinating its segments,
it is the system of lineages of its dominant clan which gives it
structural distinctness and unity by the association of lineage
values, within a common agnatic structure, with the segments
of a territorial system. In the absence of a chief or king, who
might symbolize a tribe, its unity is expressed in the idiom of
lineage and clan affiliation.

XII

619 In the Kir myth not only are the ancestors of important
614 lineages, and, through them, the lineages and the territorial
173 segments in which they are incorporated brought into relationship,
773 but the ancestors of clans, and, through them, the clans
and the tribes in which these clans are dominant, are linked
together. Thus Kir, in various versions of the myth, is adopted
by Gee, the founder of the GAATGANGEEKA family of clans;
meets Wot, in whom the Wot tribe is personified; has relations
with the GAAWAR; and so forth. The myth, thus, also mirrors
intertribal relations and brings the whole of Nuerland into a
single kinship structure, which we call the clan system as distinct
from the lineage system of a clan.

173 The clan is the farthest range to which agnatic kinship is
773 traced when the marriage of two persons is in question, but
614 some clans have, nevertheless, an agnatic relationship to other
clans, though Nuer do not regard it quite in the same way as
relationship between lineages of a clan. They give the impression,
when speaking of the ancestor of a clan, that they regard
him as an historical figure, clearly delineated against a background
of tradition, while, when speaking of the ancestor of a
family of clans, they seem to regard him as a vaguer figure
obscured in the dimness of myth.

614 We here note again that the dominant lineages in more than
613 one tribe sometimes form part of the same clan structure. Thus,
619 the lineages dominant in the Gaajok, Gaajak, and Gaagwang

614 tribes, to the east and to the west of the Nile, are all segments
613 of the GAATGANKIIR clan. Also the dominant lineages of the
619 Rengyan tribe, to the west of the Nile, and the Lou tribe, to the east of the Zeraf, are part of the JINACA clan. This distribution is easily accounted for, because we know that till recently the Eastern GAATGANKIIR and the Eastern JINACA lineages lived with the other lineages of these clans in the Jikany and Rengyan areas to the west of the Nile.

[415]

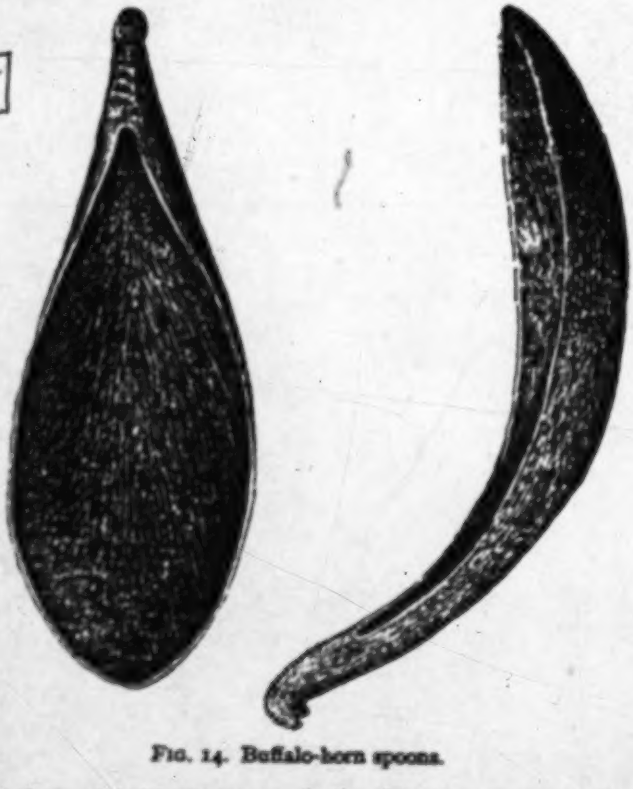

FIG. 14. Buffalo-horn spoons.

There are also more general and mythological relationships between clans. In recounting these relationships Nuer personify
773 the tribes and give them a kinship value by assimilating them to their dominant clans. Thus, they speak of Bor, Lang, Lou, Thiang, Lak, &c., as though they were persons and could have kinship relations between them like those between persons, and as though all the members of these tribes were of the same

773 fore, in an unprecise political sense, the Jikany and Ngok Dinka
tribes have, by analogy, a fraternal relationship. It may safely
602 be assumed that at one time they had close intertribal relations.
619 The GAAWAR clan have also an independent origin, their ancestor
having descended from heaven. However, a number of mythological links unite him to the founders of various clans which are dominant in tribes of the Ghaak group (see pp. 230–1), and the Gaawar tribe therefore belongs to this group. Although the Nile now separates it from the other members of the group it was at one time their most northern extension on the west bank. Owing to *buth* relationship between GAAWAR and other clans of the family of clans descended from Kwook, Gaawar are said to go with the people of the Fadang section of the Bor tribe and the Atwot people, who are said to have lived at one time between the present Rengyan and Dok tribal areas.

Through the recognition of agnatic relationship between exogamous clans and of cognatic and mythological ties between clans not considered to be agnates, all the Nuer tribes are by assimilation of political to kinship values conceptualized as a single social system. A number of clans are not associated with tribes, but their lineages are included in this system by the affiliation of the clans to one or other of the large families of clans. Thus, the JIMEM, JIKUL, GAATLEAK, and JITHER are descended from Gee and belong to the Gee group; the JIKUL are mythologically attached to the Ril group and the JAKAR to the Ghaak group; and so on. The whole of the Nuer are brought into a single kinship or pseudo-kinship system and all the territorial segments of Nuerland are interconnected by that system.

XIII

619 In our view the unusual degree of genealogical segmentation
in the Nuer lineage system is to be understood in terms of tribal
613 structure, which is, as we have seen, characterized by its tendency towards segmentation. The association of the lineage
614 system with the tribal system means that as the tribe splits into
segments so will the clan split into segments, and that the lines of cleavage will tend to coincide, for lineages are not corporate groups but are embodied in local communities through which they function structurally. Just as a man is a member of a tribal

segment opposed to other segments of the same order and yet also 619
a member of the tribe which embraces all these segments, so also
he is a member of a lineage opposed to other lineages of the same 613 •
order and yet also a member of the clan which embraces all 614
these lineages, and there is a definite correspondence between
these two sets of affiliations, since the lineage is embodied in the segment and the clan in the tribe. Therefore, the distance in clan structure between two lineages of a dominant clan tends to correspond to the structural distance between the tribal segments with which they are associated. Hence the tribal system draws out and segments the dominant clans and gives them their characteristic lineage form. Evidence in support of this contention could be cited from any Nuer tribe; we propose to examine only a few typical examples.

We have observed that in the Lou tribe the Gaatbal and Rumjok secondary sections form the primary section of Gun in opposition to the Mor primary section, and how the dominant lineages of the Gaatbal and the Rumjok sections are descended from one wife of Denac and the dominant lineage of the Mor section is descended from a different wife, so that Gaatbal and Rumjok are to one another in a relation analogous to that of full brothers and the Gun stand to the Mor in a relation analogous to that of half-brothers. We have noted, likewise, how the dominant lineages of the Gaajak are descended from two closely related wives of Kir while the dominant lineages of the Gaajok and Gaagwang, which have a very close alliance, are descended from a third wife.

The GAATGANKIIR lineages in their relation to the segmentary structure of the Jikany tribes provide an excellent test of the hypothesis that lineage structure is twisted into the form of the political structure, for the same lineages are found at extremities of Nuerland where political conditions are not identical. Had I had more time in the Jikany countries, or had I formulated the problem more clearly in the little time I had to spend there, I might have been in a position to state my conclusions more dogmatically. We will briefly analyse the lineage system of the GAATGANKIIR in its relation to two of the Gaajak primary sections.

Thiang was the eldest son of Kir. He had two wives, Nyagaani 613
and Baal. From these two wives spring the three main lineages of
cieng Thiang, the Thiang primary tribal section, TAR, LONY (or 173
GEK), and KANG. What is said to have happened is shown in the diagram on p. 242. Tar, being the only son of his mother, has founded an independent lineage and tribal section, that which lives in the

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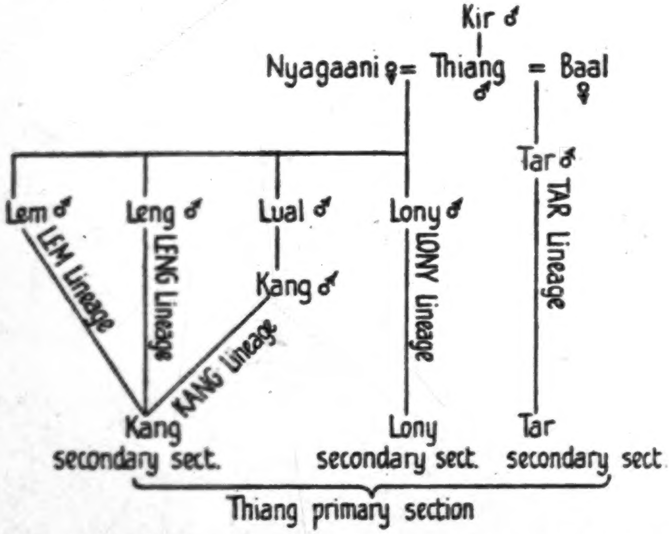
extreme south of Eastern Gaajak country. The other four lineages are all sprung from Nyagaani and are collectively known as *cieng* Nyagaani. At first her four sons stuck together, but later Lony's family increased and became more powerful than those of his brothers and tried to lord it over them, especially over Lem, the eldest. Kang, son of Lual, took the lead against Lony, and compelled him to migrate. Owing to the prominent part played by Kang, the lineages descended from Lem, Leng, and Lual are collectively known as *cieng* KANG in contrast to *cieng* LONY. These two lineages live to the extreme north of Eastern Gaajak country.[1] When the brothers are spoken about, as quarrelling, migrating, and so forth, it must be understood that the lineages and the local communities of which they form part are being personified and dramatized.


Kir ♂
Nyagaani ♀ = Thiang ♂ = Baal ♀
Tar ♂
Lem ♂
Leng ♂
Lual ♂
Lony ♂
Kang ♂
LEM Lineage
LENG Lineage
KANG Lineage
LONY Lineage
TAR Lineage
Kang secondary sect.
Lony secondary sect.
Tar secondary sect.
Thiang primary section

We see in this diagram how the splitting and merging of lineages, determined by the logic of lineage structure, follows the lines of tribal fission and fusion. Thus the descendants of Lem, Leng, and Lual, who live together, are merged in opposition to the LONY, and the LONY, who live adjacent to them, are merged with them in opposition to the TAR. The diagram does not show us the lines of descent which have become completely merged in those recorded, because such lines, having no localities specifically associated with them and therefore no community value, are not differentiated. That the diagram[1] does not truly record historic lineage growth, but is a distortion of it, is further suggested by the fact that there are, on an average, five generations from the present day to Lem and Leng, six to Lual, and seven to Lony, who was the youngest of the four brothers.

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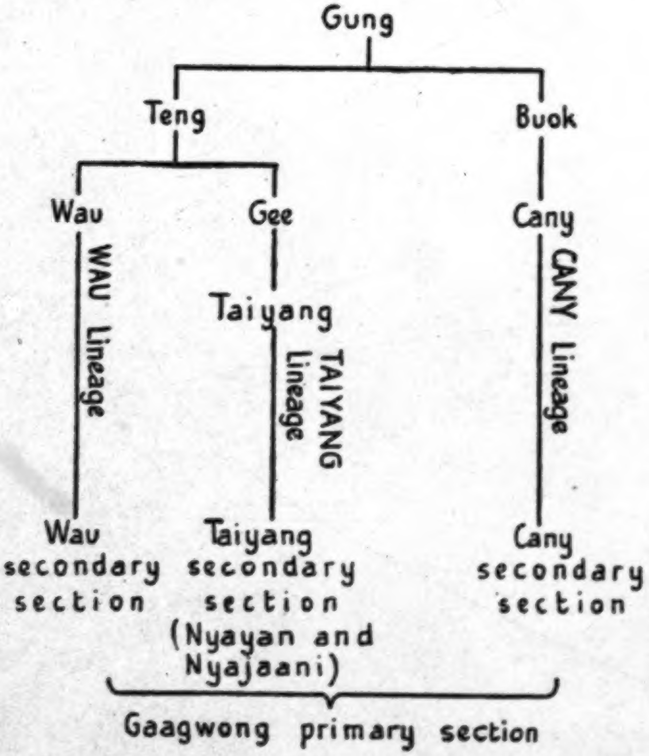
[1] The distribution of the three divisions of the Thiang primary section of the Gaajak tribe contrasts with the unbroken territory of the segments of primary sections elsewhere in Nuerland. I have not visited the area, and cannot explain this unusual distribution by historical events nor state its structural consequences.

The GAAGWONG lineage, which is the nucleus of the Gaagwong section, is called after Gung, son of Kun, son of Kir. The GAAGWONG maximal lineage splits into several major lineages. To make illustration easier only those important among the Eastern Jikany are figured in the diagram: CANY, WAU, and TAIYANG (NYAYAN and NYAJAANI), the descendants of Buok, Wau, and Gee.


Gung
Teng
Buok
Wau
Gee
Cany
WAU Lineage
Taiyang
TAIYANG Lineage
CANY Lineage
Wau secondary section
Taiyang secondary section (Nyayan and Nyajaani)
Cany secondary section
Gaagwong primary section

The CANY major lineage split up, as shown in the diagram on p. 244, into a number of smaller lineages of three to four generations in depth. In this diagram the traditional representation of cleavage between sons of the same father but of different mothers is shown

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[1] [See p. 242 -- Analyst]

613
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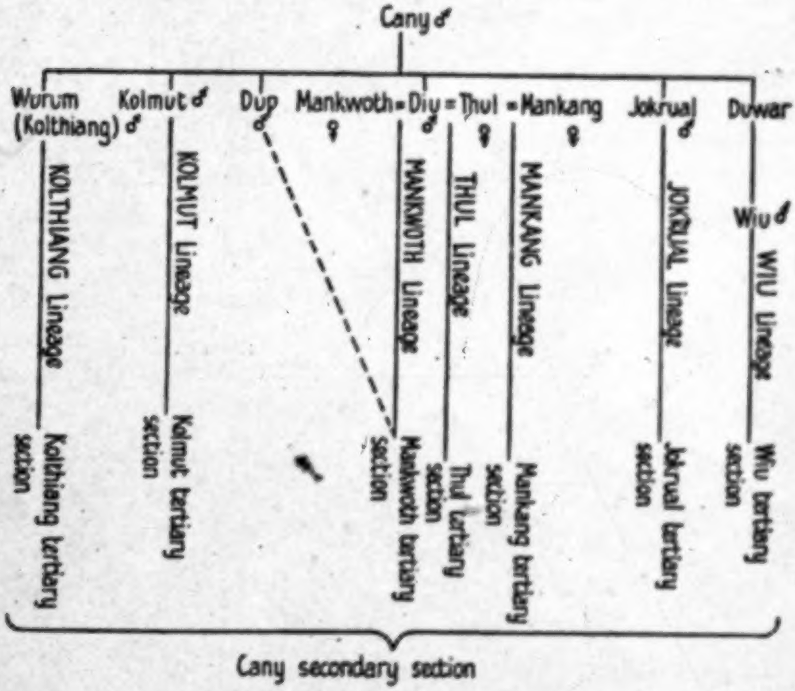
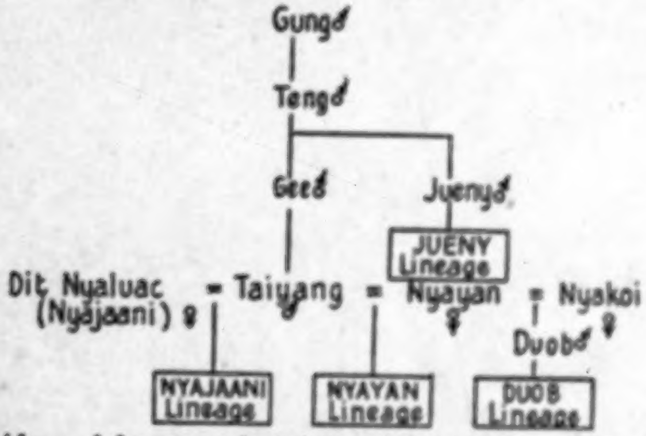
in the lines which spring from Diu through his three wives: Mankwoth, Thul, and Mankang. The descendants of Dup are normally referred to as *cieng* MANKWOTH because they live with them. Common residence has reacted on the lineage structure, so that the DUP lineage has become very largely merged in the MANKWOTH lineage. For this diagram I am indebted to the Government files of Nasser District. I have no record of the divisions of the WAU lineage.


Cany ♂
Wurum (Kolthiang) ♂
Kolmut ♂
Dup ♂
Mankwoth ♀
Diu ♂
Thul ♀
Mankang ♀
Jokrual ♂
Duwar
Wiu ♂
KOLTHIANG Lineage
KOLMUT Lineage
MANKWOTH Lineage
THUL Lineage
MANKANG Lineage
JOKRUAL Lineage
WIU Lineage
Kolthiang tertiary section
Kolmut tertiary section
Mankwoth tertiary section
Thul tertiary section
Mankang tertiary section
Jokrual tertiary section
Wiu tertiary section
Cany secondary section

In Western Nuerland WAU and CANY are politically unimportant lineages and are merged with *cieng* Taiyang, which is contrasted with *cieng* Jueny, called after Jueny, son of Teng, son of Gung, who founded a lineage politically unimportant among the Eastern Jikany. The TAIYANG lineage has two branches called after his wives Nyayan and Nyajaani. In Western Nuerland there is a third lineage springing from a third wife, Nyakoi.

It is interesting to observe that Jueny, whose line is politically unimportant among the Eastern Jikany, is there given as a son of Gee and merged in the TAIYANG line, while Duob is given as a son of Nyajaani and merged in her lineage. Here again we see how lineage structure is influenced by political relations.



A wider and deeper analysis is required to prove the thesis we have put forward and of which we have given a few out of many examples. It is, however, supported by evidence of a different kind. We found that it was always easier to obtain a more complete record, and a longer line, of descent from members of dominant lineages in the larger tribes than in the smaller tribes, showing that greater attention is paid to the lineage system in the larger tribes and that the clan structure is broadened and deepened to serve its structural function. Also, we found it easy to obtain from any adult member of an aristocratic lineage an account of the other maximal and major lineages of his clan and a long list of ancestors, some nine or ten at least, giving a consistent length from the founder of the clan; whereas we found that we could not elicit the same information from members of clans which have no tribal associations. They were often able to trace their descent back for only some four to six generations, the time depth they gave was seldom consistent, and they were usually unable to give a coherent account of the other lineages of their clan. We attribute this fact to the absence of systemization through association with tribal structures. A lineage does not stand in territorial opposition to other lineages of its clan, but has with them only a vague ceremonial relationship, and this relationship may never be expressed in corporate action. Consequently there is generally a complete absence of any elaborate system of lineages like those of the dominant clans. There are many JIMEM clansmen and doubtless one could by

613 173 putting together their genealogies construct some sort of tree of descent from Mem, in which the agnatic relationship between various lineages could be indicated; but it would be very unlike the spontaneous statements that at once delineate the lineage system of large clans like the JINACA, associated with tribal territories.

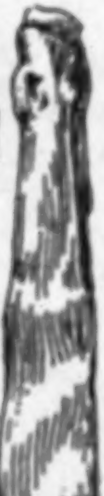


FIG. 15. Leather flail.

[412] It is also very noticeable that Nuer knowledge of the lineage system of a dominant clan tends to be restricted to those parts of the system that correspond to segments of their tribe. Thus the JINACA lineages which are associated with segments of the Lou tribe are well known to Lou tribesmen, but they have no, or very little, knowledge of the JINACA lineages of the Rengyan tribe. Likewise I experienced much difficulty in obtaining from Gaajok and Gaajak tribesmen a clear account of the lineages of the GAATGANKIIR clan which form the dominant nucleus of the Gaagwang tribe, though they were well informed about the lineages of the same clan which are associated with segments of their own tribes.

It follows from our account that, as we have suggested before, the lineage system of a clan can only to a very limited extent be considered a true record of descent. Not only does its time depth appear to be limited and fixed, but also the distance between collateral lineages appears to be determined by the political distance between the sections with which these lineages are associated, and it may be supposed that a lineage only persists as a distinct line of descent when it is significant politically. Ancestors above the founder of a minimal lineage are relevant only as points of departure for denoting lines of descent when these lines are rendered significant by the political role of the lineage system. We have suggested that the depth of lineages is a function of the range of counting agnation on an existential plane, and we now further suggest that the range of counting agnation is largely determined by its organizing role in political structure.

1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

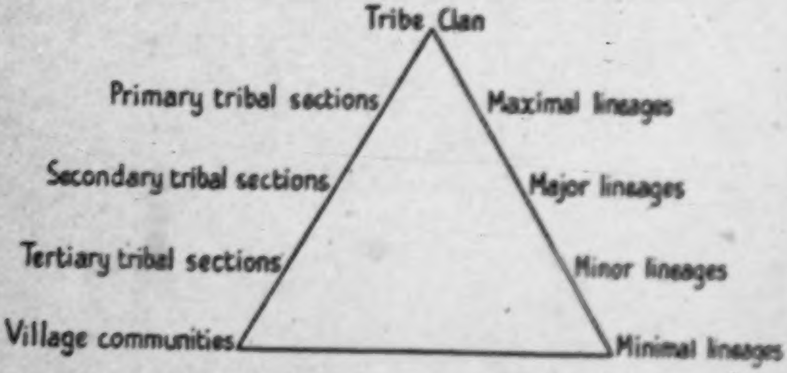
Nuer consider that lineage cleavage arises from a fundamental 613
cleavage in the family between *gaatgwan*, children of the father, 829
and *gaatman*, children of the mother. Where there are two
wives and each has sons, the lineage bifurcates from this point.
A lineage bifurcation is a polygamous family writ large. *Thok
dwiel*, lineage, means this; it is 'the entrance to the hut', the
mother's hut. The tiny twigs we see in the *gol*, household, grow
into the great branches of the lineages. It is for this reason that
lineages are so often named after women, the mothers from
whose wombs sprang the different lines of descent. As we understand 613
the process, what happens is that certain lineage groups 182
gain political importance and exclusiveness, becoming nuclei
of tribal sections, and that only by so doing is their structural
position stabilized and are the points of their bifurcation rendered
fixed and permanent points of convergence in lineage structure.
This explains how it is that in only a few out of a vast number
of polygamous families is maternal descent structurally significant,
and why the bifurcation occurs in the lineage where it
occurs in the tribe.

This tendency towards co-ordination of territorial segmentation
and lineage segmentation can be seen in the various stages
of territorial expansion between the household and the tribe.
When brothers of an influential family live in different parts of a
village and gather around them a cluster of relations and dependants,
these hamlet-groups are named after them and they
become the point at which the lineage is likely to bifurcate.
Thus, if the brothers are called Bul and Nyang, people speak
of the *gol* of Bul and the *gol* of Nyang, and if later the grandchildren
of one of them move to a different village site the
lineage will split into two branches. Such minimal lineages as
those pictured in the diagrams on pages 196–7* occupy adjacent
villages, or widely separated divisions of the same large straggling
village, and make separate camps along the same stretch of river
or adjacent camps around a small lake. The points of divergence
of lineages from clan trees are thus related to the size and
distribution of inhabited sites in a tribal area.

The association of the tribal system with a clan may thus 619
be supposed to influence the form of the lineage structure. We 613
may further emphasize the morphological consistency between

*[see cat. 116—Analyst]

619 the two structures. There are always more villages than tertiary
613 segments in a tribe and more tertiary segments than secondary segments, and so on, so that, since each territorial unit is associated with a lineage, the narrowing of such units from the multitude of villages to the single unit of the tribe must be reflected in the conceptual structure of the lineage system, there being a multitude of minimal lineages, fewer minor lineages, and so forth, till the single unit of the clan is reached. If this suggestion is accepted it is evident that the lineages are in number and structural position strictly limited and controlled by the system of territorial segmentation. The two systems may thus be represented diagrammatically by the same figure, though the correspondence is not exact.


Tribe
Clan
Primary tribal sections
Maximal lineages
Secondary tribal sections
Major lineages
Tertiary tribal sections
Minor lineages
Village communities
Minimal lineages

CHAPTER I

KINSHIP AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

I

621 114 In *The Nuer* I stated that the village is the smallest corporate group of a political kind among the Nuer and that in reading my description of their political structure the reader would have to take for granted the network of kinship and affinal ties within a village. I must now ask him to remember that, though I describe in this book relationships between persons within local communities without again describing the wider political structure, the local communities within which these relationships function and which they serve to maintain are the basic units of that structure. I must also make it plain that in *The Nuer* I was chiefly interested in the relation of clan segmentation to tribal segmentation, and therefore in discussing lineages gave chief attention to the systematic form their structure presents when co-ordinated 613 621 with tribal, or political, structure. To avoid misunderstanding it is desirable to emphasize that in Nuerland there are also small lineages which have fewer branches and less depth than the dominant clans to which I gave particular attention in my book. These less systematized descent groups may be associated with local communities smaller than tribes and their larger segments, but they are only associated with them in terms of the tribal structure as a whole through some relationship to its dominant clan; and sometimes they are not associated with local communities at all.

621 The Nuer village (*cieng*) is a corporate group with a feeling of solidarity. Though its members have contacts with persons in neighbouring villages, and even in other sections of their tribe and in adjacent tribes, the greater part of their activities are carried out within their own village community and their strongest ties are generally with other members of it. Nuer have great affection for their homes and, in spite of their wandering habits, men born and bred in a village are likely to return to it even if they live elsewhere for some years. Villagers fight side by side in defence and attack and they support one another in feuds. When their youths attend dances in the district they enter them

22/ are dry-season activities. Also, milking, cleaning kraals, making up fires, cooking, pounding grain, and other chores which are performed separately and at different times by each household in the villages tend to be performed in unison in the camps. The greater density of the community and the rigours of the season
36/ impose a common regimen. Another feature of cattle camps which has some social importance is their composition. Neighbouring village communities which in the rains occupy different sites, often divided by wide swamps, frequently make common camp or they camp so near to each other that there are more intimate relations between their members in the dry season. The radius of effective kinship is greater in the dry season than in the wet.

Although there is this greater cohesion in camps, the families and joint families and larger clusters of kin whose social distinction is evident in the distribution of homesteads in the villages maintain their identity in the distribution of camp windscreens and huts. Each family has its own windscreen, corresponding to its byre in the village, and in the centre of it is the *gol*, its hearth of ashes. Attached to the windscreen are the beehive huts of the womenfolk, just as in the villages their wattle-and-daub huts are attached to the byre. The windscreens of those whose homesteads adjoin in the villages are generally adjacent to, almost touching, one another in the camps and form clearly demarcated rows in the circle of camp dwellings. When a large village is clearly segmented, the separation observable in the distribution of its homesteads can also be noted in the dispersal of smaller camps within the general camping area. These social alinements are most evident in the early part of the dry season, before the large concentrations of the main season have been formed, for then small groups of kin often make independent camps around isolated pools at some, sometimes a considerable, distance from each other.

II

602 All the members of such a village or camp as I have briefly
613 described[4] are kin. Before giving examples in illustration of this
614 statement I must say again what I have already said in *The Nuer* about the difference between lineage relations and kin relations because it is a very important difference. In speaking of lineages I refer to unilateral groups of kin—among the Nuer groups of

[4] [Cf. cat. 116, pp. 2 ff. -- Analyst]

agnates—and in speaking of kinship I refer to categories of kin. 602
In speaking of lineage relations I therefore refer to relations 613
between groups within a system of such groups, whereas in speaking 614
of kin, or kinship, relations I refer to relations between persons standing to one another in certain categories of relationship within a system of such categories. It is often difficult for those who have not lived in a society with a lineage structure to appreciate the distinction I have drawn because the relationship between collateral lineages of the same clan is necessarily also one that can be expressed in terms of a kinship category, and it is possible in certain circumstances even to speak of the relation between lineages of different clans in similar terms, for they may wish on occasions to stress a genealogical nexus between themselves, indicating thereby that, for example, the one stand to the other as *gaatnar*, children of the maternal uncle, or as *gaatwac*, children of the paternal aunt. But in these cases it is a relationship between groups that is referred to and not a personal relationship between individuals except in so far as it is derived from the relationship between the groups to which they belong.

As I have explained in *The Nuer*, the lineages of Nuerland are dispersed groups, though in a certain sense they may be regarded as corporate groups in the form they take as political segments in fusion with other elements. They provide the conceptual framework of the political system within which they also function as its organizing principle through the expression of political fission and fusion in terms of their segmentary structure. The identification of lineage segments with tribal segments in a political context is brought about by the acknowledgement that certain clans and their lineages have rights in certain tribal areas and by the residence in those areas of a sufficient number of members of these dominant groups to act as nuclei of local and political groups. It probably never happens that all members of a lineage of any order—maximal, major, minor, or minimal—live in the area associated with it and to which it gives its name, though very many of them may do so.

Because the usual reference to a lineage is in a political context it 601
is generally spoken of as the *cieng* of such-and-such a people (the 613
name of the lineage being given), for, like the word *gol*, *cieng* has 614
always a residential, and not an exclusive descent, connotation. When reference is made to a lineage in a context in which it is

601 desired to particularize it as an exclusive descent group, a group of
613 agnatic kin descended from a common ancestor, Nuer use the
614 expressions *thok dwiel* or *thok mac*, literally the doorway to a hut
or the hearth, to denote it; but these expressions are little used because abstraction of a lineage from its social and political matrix has only rarely to be made: on certain ritual occasions and in connexion with feuds and rules of exogamy.

601 The distinction between an agnatic lineage relation and an
602 agnatic kinship relation is clearly made by Nuer themselves, from
whom indeed I learnt it. They use the word *buth* to describe agnatic kinship between collateral lineages, that is to say, kinship between groups and between individuals only in virtue of their membership of these groups. On the other hand, they use the word *mar* to describe any and every relationship of a kinship kind between persons. All persons with whom a man acknowledges any kind of kinship, through however many other persons, are *mar*, kin, to him. People say of him and of any such person '*teke mar*', 'they have kinship'; and he speaks of any or all of his relations as '*jimarida*', 'my kinsmen'. The term *mar* includes relatives through the mother, the maternal kin, and through the father, the paternal kin. This is the meaning the word has when used by Nuer collectively and without restrictive qualification. Its sphere of reference is indicative of the balance we find in social life generally between the paternal kin and the maternal kin, a balance evident in the configurations of kin in local communities which I am about to describe. Nuer also sometimes use *mar* when speaking of affinal relations, especially when they are long established. In a broad sense they also are kin in the eyes of Nuer, just as in our own society we include our affines in the category of relatives.

Where there is a *buth* relationship between lineages there must also, in one way of speaking, be *mar* between the members of one and the members of the other, for the relationship between collateral lineages is agnatic and the members of the one must therefore be patrilineal kin to the members of the other. The question therefore arises: at what point in the spread of an agnatic line, conceived of as a number of living patrilineal kinsmen, does interpersonal *mar* relationship become the inter-group relationship Nuer call *buth* so that these kinsmen divide into segmentary descent groups or lineages? The question may be put in another way: how many generations back do Nuer trace patrilineal ascent

before they reach the first ancestor from whom bifurcate collateral 601
lines of descent of the kind they call a *thok dwiel*, a lineage? 602

A Nuer, when asked about this matter, gave an historical explanation: 'In the days when people scattered, brother and son went raiding and they settled where they raided. Then kinship ceased (*ce mar thuk*) and there remained only a lineage relationship (*ce dwoth ni buth*).' This could only have happened, however, as Nuer themselves say, after some generations had elapsed. Even
today descendants of Nuer who settled to the east of the Nile, after [583]
raiding the Dinka in what are now the Jikany and Lou tribal areas, sometimes travel to the homes of their forebears to the west of the Nile to receive cattle which are their due on the marriages of the daughters of kinsmen from whose fathers and grandfathers their fathers and grandfathers separated. While the privileges of kinship are thus claimed, the persons concerned cannot be
regarded as *jibuthni*, members of collateral lineages. Indeed, in [613]
my experience, Nuer do not generally speak of lineages till four or five generations back in patrilineal ascent, and I think also that there are good technical reasons for following Nuer usage in this matter and for not speaking of lineages before at least the third generation is reached.

Although any relative of a man is *mar* to him, the word most frequently refers to close relatives only, and on the paternal side generally implies those persons on the marriage of whose daughters a man can claim a portion of the bridewealth proper, which means an agnatic relationship deriving from any forebear as far back as, but not beyond, the bride's great grandfather. Nuer commonly explain such matters in terms of cattle-rights. Also it is for descendants of the great grandfather that specific kinship terms are used in their primary reference. It is this grouping, in relation to any person, of agnates of three generations in depth that I shall have in mind when I speak of a man's paternal kin.

Beyond this point we enter into the structural relations of the 602
lineage system where the Nuer begin to speak of collectivities of 613
agnates. There is always *buth* between collateral lineages of the
same clan and there may also be *buth* between clans, as I have
explained in *The Nuer*. Also, a captured Dinka boy may be *lath* [597]
buthni, given *buth*, and thereby made a member of his captor's
lineage. Groups which have no *buth* have *rul* between them, [609]
that is, they are 'strangers'. I omit further discussion about the 000

KINSHIP AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

621 613 614 602 The village site belongs to the Riaagh lineage of the Keunyang maximal lineage of the Gaatbol clan, the dominant clan in Leek tribal area of which Karlual area, where Nyueny is situated, is a section. Members of that lineage with their wives and concubines and their affines account for ten out of the twenty-six homesteads. The people of Nyueny hamlet, the central and northern parts of the village, are known as 'the children of Jany', and Jany's descendants with their wives and concubines and affines account for another ten homesteads. 'The children of Jany', whose *tut* is Karlual (homestead 9),‡ count collectively as *gaatwac*, children of the paternal aunt, or, as Nuer often put it, *gaatnyiet*, children of daughters, to the Riaagh lineage, whom they call *gaatnar*, children of the maternal uncle. The senior Riaagh men are the 'bulls' of the village in the tribal sense of the word *tut*.

621 602 It will again be observed that the village is not an exclusive lineage group (with its wives) but is a cluster of kin (including affines). In this case, however, there is a lineage core to the village community, and this core is that branch of the dominant clan of the tribe which owns the village site. Some members of its collateral minimal lineage, the Gom, also live in the village. I draw attention to further typical features. We saw that at Konye many of the heads of families were living there because of affinal relationships with other members of the village. The counterpart to this is the relationship of sister's son to mother's brother, for when the children of a resident sister or daughter grow up in a village those who stand in an affinal relationship to their father stand in an avuncular relationship to them. This is a very significant feature of Nuer local communities and from it follows another common feature: in course of time a maternal link of this kind may be treated as though it were a paternal link and therefore within the genealogical structure of the principal lineage of the community. Jany's mother Duai is so treated. Nuer say of a woman who has this structural position that 'she has become a man'. Cognation becomes regarded for ordinary social purposes [541] within community life as equal to agnation. A sister's son–mother's brother relationship may come about in a village not by a man going to live with his wife's people but by widows bringing their children to live with their own people after their husbands have died, a mode of residence which in certain circumstances may continue after the deaths of the mothers. This

‡ [Cf. ont. 116, p. (18)-- Analyst]

is illustrated at Nyueny by the daughters of Jany. The widows 621
may take lovers in the village, or they may take them from a 602
different village and their lovers come to live with them. This custom is another feature of interest, for some ties between members of a village may be through widow-concubines, or even through unmarried concubines. Any such ties are *mar*, kinship.

Allowing for the fact I have mentioned,[1] that when people live 621
together as members of the same small local community female 602
links are often given equivalence to male links in a genealogy, 613
a cluster of kin such as that of Nyueny can be presented as descended from a common ancestor. It might be described as a cognatic lineage, but in speaking of the Nuer I think it wise to restrict the term 'lineage' to a group of agnates within a system of such groups and to speak of a cluster like that of Nyueny as being a lineage to which are attached, on account of common residence, other lines of kin through females. For if an attached family or extended family of this kind were to leave the common residence the link which binds them to the lineage would cease to be significant for them and would lose its importance in favour of some new link more appropriate to their new attachment, whatever that might be, in their new village. Within a cluster of this kind relations between persons are regulated by the values of the kinship system. Seen as a unit from the outside, and in its corporate relations with other village communities, lineage values are dominant.

I now examine the kinship texture of a cattle camp at which I
resided for close on three months in 1931. Yakwac is a small [101]
mound on the left bank of the Sobat. Like Nyueny, it is on the 361
periphery of Nuerland where the Lou tribe faces the small Balak Dinka people who at one time occupied both banks of the river. I should explain that it was necessity rather than choice which led me to spend a large part of my time among the Lou Nuer at peripheral points. As I had no land transport and the Lou could not be induced to act as porters I had to rely on transport by canoe, and the larger rivers are in many places the tribal frontiers.

Yakwac village consists—I speak of 1931—of only three byres
and a few attached huts. The chief man of the village is Cam- 621
Carau, who owns one of the byres, the other two being owned by 602
Bithou, his brother, and Kirkir, a kinsman of his mother. The real 'bull' of the village is, however, Cam's mother, Nyagen, and the

[1] [cf. cat. no., p. (16)--Analyst]

The entire population of Majok was not at Yakwac in 1931, for
621 many of its members, including most of the womenfolk, had
602 remained inland and some families spent the dry season at other
601 camps on the Sobat. The women who came to Yakwac slept in the huts of the village, so no grass beehive huts were erected. The population of the camp was about eighty souls. I have again simplified the genealogy by showing ghost-marriages as simple legal marriages, but I have indicated, as I have not done in the other genealogies presented in this chapter, those members of the camp who are known to be Dinka or of Dinka descent. Those among them who are shown as members of the Pual lineage have been adopted into one of its branches. The names of only a few women and none of small children are given in the genealogical table, which is intended to demonstrate the kinship ties between the occupants of the windscreens, all of whom, with the exception of the mother of Cam, are males.

621 A study of the genealogy of Yakwac cattle camp reveals the
613 features we have already noted as being significant in the gene-
601 alogy of Nyueny. It is a lineage structure—the lineage being a branch of the dominant clan in the tribal area and that branch which is dominant in the district in which the camp was formed—to which are attached other lines through females, thus giving the genealogy a cognatic form, and affines. In order to graft themselves on to the tree of this dominant clan the linked families trace their descent through females at the points of graft as though these women had been men. It was a long time before I discovered, for example, that Kirkir's paternal grandfather was Buom and not Kol. A rather unusual example in which this process is strikingly illustrated is the line of ascent of Deng-Nyajal through females in three generations to the point of graft, Gai. Nyanhial and her daughter Nyajal were captured by the Anuak on a raid into Lou country and for many years lived in Anuakland, where Deng was begotten by an Anuak father. In the camp Deng was always referred to as Deng-Nyajal after his mother and not as Deng-Cul after his father, because Nyajal, and not Cul, is genealogically significant in Deng's social milieu. In the same way we referred always to Cuol as Cuol-Mer and not as Cuol-Rwac. In this cluster of kin at Yakwac camp the importance of affinal and maternal ties is evident.

613 I have indicated Dinka origins 4 where I have satisfactory evi-
601 dence for them, partly to show the very considerable absorption
597 4[Cf. facing p. 19 (a)-(e) -- [illegible]]

2:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931,1936) 1951

FJ22 Nuer FJ22

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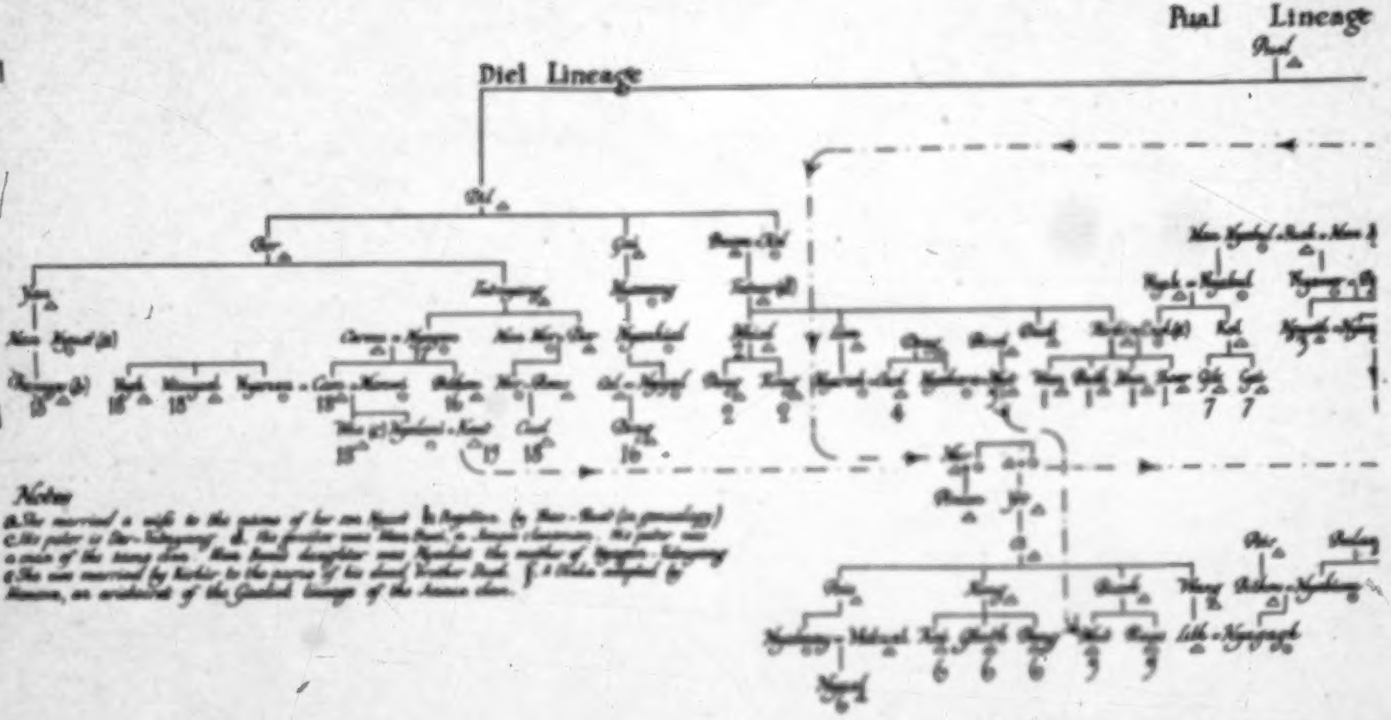
[facing p 19 (a)]


Pual Lineage
Pual
Diel Lineage
Diel
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Notes

a. She married a wife to the name of her own [illegible] b. [illegible] by [illegible] (in genealogy)
c. His pater is [illegible]. d. the [illegible] was [illegible], a [illegible]. His pater was
a man of the [illegible] clan. [illegible] daughter was [illegible] the mother of [illegible]
e. She was married by [illegible] to the name of his dead brother [illegible]. f. A [illegible] adopted by
[illegible], an aristocrat of the [illegible] lineage of the [illegible] clan.

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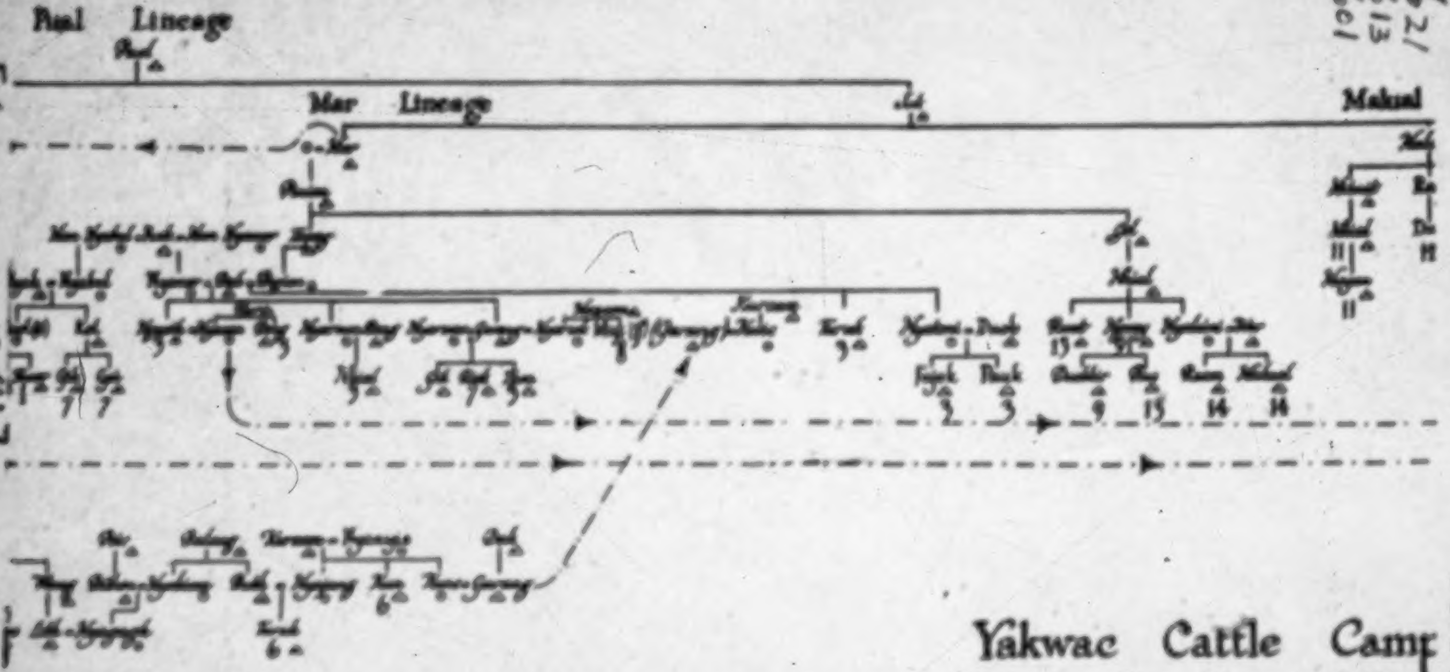
[facing p. 19 (b)]


Rual Lineage
Mar Lineage
Mahual

Yakwac Cattle Camp

Names written thus [illegible] are Dinka or of Dinka descent
△ Male ○ Female

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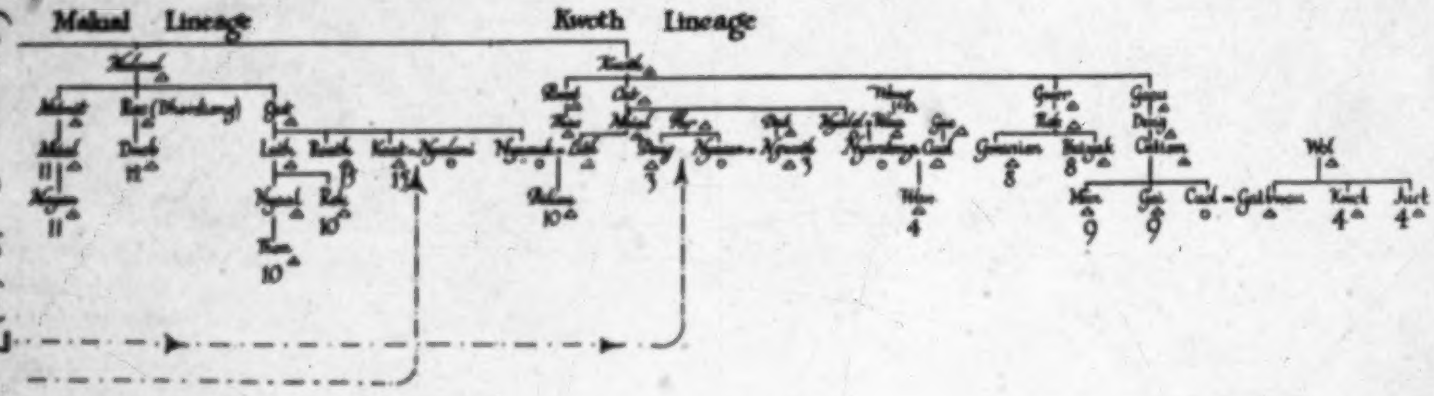
613
601

2:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931,1936) 1951
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

[facing p. 19(c)]


Malual Lineage
Kwoth Lineage

Camp

613 601 597 of Dinka which has taken place, by adoption into Nuer lineages and through marriage, in a typical Nuer community, and partly to account for some marriages which might otherwise appear to be breaches of the Nuer rules of exogamy. These Dinka are of varied tribal origin. Among those whose names appear in the genealogy I have recorded Bor, Fadang, Luac, Thoc, and Dunjol origins. The absorption of so many Dinka has affected, through the practice of adoption, the rules regulating marriage, and it has also affected modes of residence, since a Dinka who has not been adopted into a Nuer lineage readily attaches himself to his wife's people or to the people who have married his sister or daughter, as do also his children to their maternal uncle's kin. The absorption of Dinka has led to a further complication in the already very complicated patterns of Nuer genealogies, for it sometimes happens that captured Dinka brothers or other kin are adopted into different lineages or even into different clans.

I would also draw attention to the different tribal origins of those Nuer in the genealogy who are not members of the dominant lineage, because they illustrate the movement of individuals and families which is so characteristic a feature of Nuer society: Yit was a Bul tribesman, he and Pinien being children of sisters or, as the Nuer say, a man and his *gatmanlende*, his mother's sister's son; Carau and Wan-Wang were Jikany tribesmen, Carau being an aristocrat of the Lony section of the Jikany, though begotten by an Anuak; Nhial-Deng is of Thiang tribal origin; Kurcam was a man of the Jimem clan, a clan which is found throughout Nuerland and without a tribal territory of its own; and so forth. Indeed, it is necessary to point out that not all outsiders attached to a lineage core remain attached to it. Nuer move about their country freely, and reside for some years with one lot of kin and then for some years with another.

621 613 The genealogy of Yakwac camp gives us a typical cross-section of a Nuer tribal society. We see how the local community is built up around a lineage through attachment to it of extra-lineage persons by the stressing of one or other category of kinship, and we thus see further the relation of the lineage structure to the kinship system within the framework of the tribal society. The collateral, and in a structural sense, opposed lineage to the Pual is the Dumien, who live near Pul Thul and Pul Nyerol in the same Nyerol district in which the Pual have their wet-season home and

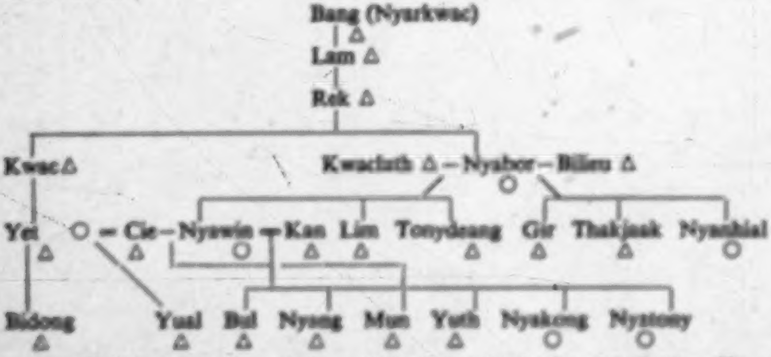
who, like them, often camp on the Sobat river in the drought. A 621
genealogical analysis of the Dumien community would disclose 613
the same kind of cluster as has been disclosed for the Pual community—a *thok dwiel,* lineage, to which are linked in many different ways through kinship values *rul,* strangers, and *jang,* Dinka, the whole forming a *cieng,* a local community who are kin. Pual and Dumien together form a single major lineage called Leng, the collateral to which is the Nyarkwac lineage whose home is adjacent to the home of the Leng. The Nyarkwac lineage in its community form consists of similar clusters composed of its branches and their accretions. Leng and Nyarkwac lineages form the Gaatbal maximal lineage, occupying the northern part of the Lou tribal territory and one of the three maximal lineages of the Jinaca clan, which is the dominant clan of the Lou tribe.

My final illustration is included to draw special attention to 621
natural, as contrasted with what we may call legal, ties of kinship
in Nuer society. These are brought about by unions other than the 602
union of simple legal marriage and are very numerous in Nuer- 601
land. I explain their nature in Chapter III. The recognition of natural ties in the Nuer system of kinship values as social ties, and not merely as natural relationships, further enhances the significance of women as persons through whom descent is traced for the purpose of establishing kinship with those with whom Nuer have relations in their community life.

I quoted earlier in this chapter a remark made to me by a Nuer
of Kurmayom, where I spent about three weeks in 1931. Kur- [101]
mayom is a village of the Lou tribe to the west of Yakwac and, like it, on the Sobat river. It is near the border between the Lou tribe and the Ngok Dinka. The most prominent person in the village is a noted magician called Bul-Kan, and it is his family that I shall now briefly examine. He and the cluster of kin around him occupy eleven byres in the chief hamlet of the village. He is a member of a minimal lineage called (*cieng*) Nyabor after the name of his mother's mother. She was a woman of the Nyarkwac major lineage of the Jinaca clan who bore her children in unmarried concubinage to two men. The fathers legitimatized their children by payment of cattle. Lim, Nyawin, and Tonydeang thus became members of the Jidiet clan since their pater, called Kwaclath, was a man of this clan, and Gir, Thakjaak, and Nyanhial became members of the Jimem clan, their pater Bilieu being

621 a man of this clan. One of these children, the girl Nyawin, married
602 Kan-Kwoth of the Kiek clan, to whom she bore Yuth, Nyakong,
601 and Nyatony before he died. She continued to live in his home after his death and there took a lover, a man of the Ngok Dinka called Cie, to whom she bore Bul, Nyang, and Mun. These three sons count, of course, as children of Kan-Kwoth. The Dinka Cie then, at the behest of Nyawin and her sons, took a wife to himself with cattle of the herd of Kan-Kwoth and by her begat Yual. Yual was therefore not only a natural paternal half-brother of Bul, Nyang, and Mun but also their brother in a further sense, for he was *gat ghokien*, the child of their cattle. I was told that he had also been formally adopted by Bul into his lineage. Mun had died before 1931, and Bul and Nyang were already elderly men whose sons and daughters had homes and herds and children of their own.

●[613]



It will be noted that, although Bul is called after his father Kan and is a member of the Kiek clan and his mother was a woman of the Jidiet clan, the lineage now call themselves *cieng* Nyabor and trace their ascent through Nyabor into the stem of the Nyarkwac branch of the dominant Jinaca clan, neglecting for ordinary social purposes the lines of descent of both Kan and Kwaclath. They attach themselves in this way to the lineage which owns the village site and with whom the tribal section in which it is situated is identified, its chief 'bull' in the village being Bidong-Yet, whose name I have therefore inserted in the table.

IV

621 The kinship relations of persons to one another in a Nuer com-
602 munity are, I think it will be agreed, very complex. Indeed they

are more complex than I have shown them to be so far, as will 621
appear when the forms of domestic union obtaining among the 602
Nuer are described. The complexity is partly due to these diverse forms of marriage, and also to the python-like assimilation by the Nuer of vast numbers of Dinka through adoption or intermarriage.

However, certain preliminary conclusions of a general kind can 621
be drawn from the few genealogies—only a fraction of those col- 613
lected—I have cited as examples. A Nuer community, whether small or big, is not composed exclusively of members of a single lineage and their wives or, correspondingly, not all members of a lineage live in the same community. On the other hand, in any large village or camp there is represented an agnatic lineage of one or other order and into the growth of this lineage are grafted, through the tracing of descent through females, branches which are regarded in certain situations and in a certain sense as part of it and in other situations and in a different sense as not part of it. Other lines and persons are grafted into the lineage by adoption, but this can only happen to Dinka and other foreigners, not to men of true Nuer origin. Attached to the lineage, directly or indirectly, are also a considerable number of affines of diverse kinds.

In their collective relations with other communities, and as seen 621
collectively by the members of these communities, there is a 613
fusion of the attached elements with the lineage. They are incor- 602
porated in it, and the resultant whole is spoken of as the *cieng* or *wec*, community, of the lineage, which is both its core and the symbol of its social identity as a unit in the tribal system. But within the community itself there are occasions when a formal distinction between the lineage and its incorporated elements has to be made and the status of its members has to be defined to the exclusion of the *rul*, strangers: the *gaatnyiet*, the children of daughters (of the lineage), and the affines.

In daily contacts between persons within the community their relations are expressed not in the language of lineage structure but in the language of the kinship system by reference to categories of kinship within that system. Thus men of the same minimal lineage have only an undifferentiated lineage relationship on such occasions as the lineage acts or is thought of as a group. Otherwise, and as persons, their relationship to one another is one of *gwanlen*,

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613 father's brother, *gatgwanlen*, father's brother's son, *wac*, father's
602 sister, and so on.

613 602 Lineages are articulated as groups of agnatic kin at a different, usually ritual, level of the social life, and they are articulated as conglomerates, fused with other elements, at the political level. Kinship ties belong to another order of social relations, relations between persons and not between groups. The members of a lineage group are socially undifferentiated as such in the inter-lineage structure because it is a structural relationship between groups. In the kinship system they are socially differentiated by category and degree of relationship—this being an essential characteristic of the system—because the kinship system is a system of relationships between persons.

621 602 As we have seen, members of a Nuer community are all *mar*, kin (including affines in this term), to one another. Whoever is kith must also be kin. Common membership of a village or camp does not in itself provide a man with a secure basis for his personal relations with its other members. That is provided chiefly by the kinship system by which a kinship tie established with any person in the village or camp gives a man a kinship status of some kind with every other person in the village or camp—with all his neighbours. Consequently a local community consists of a great number of cross-strands which compose an intricate network of kinship ties.

The relationships which enter into any particular composition are not the same as those of another, and they change from year to year and from season to season inasmuch as Nuer frequently change their place of residence. Therefore a cluster of kin of this kind does not constitute a specific kinship group. When it is thought of by Nuer as a unit it is not as a kinship group but as a residential group by association with a lineage or site. Its members are *jicieng* so-and-so, the people of a community of a certain lineage, or *ji* such-and-such, the people of a certain place. To any member of the community the rest are '*jiciengda*', 'the people of my home'. '*Jimarida*', 'my kin', has quite a different connotation: it is a set of personal relationships to him and includes men and women who do not belong to the cluster at all.

547 563 615 The absorption of Dinka into these communities of kin on so considerable a scale has been significant. As I have pointed out in *The Nuer*, assimilation of conquered Dinka tribes and tribal sections has not, for various reasons, resulted in a class or caste, or in

597 563 613 any other rigid hierarchical structure. It has been brought about by their incorporation into Nuer lineages by adoption and by their assimilation to them through intermarriage. When Dinka are adopted into a lineage, absorption into Nuer society presents no great difficulty. Their Dinka origin is remembered by members of the lineage of their adoption, at any rate for some generations, but after one or two generations it may not be known to outsiders; and I suppose that in course of time it may be forgotten within the lineage itself. They are part of the lineage, have the same status as its other members, and are points of growth in the branch equal to men born into it. But when Dinka are not adopted into a Nuer lineage absorption is achieved with greater difficulty and by circuitous means. If we examine closely the history of those persons in the genealogies I have recorded who have attached themselves permanently to an affinal or maternal family and through it to a minimal lineage, and if we trace also the histories of those persons who through such an attachment in the past now trace their descent from the lineage through a female, we shall find that in a very great number, I venture to say in the vast majority, of cases they are Dinka. This is a development which it is easy to understand because captured Dinka or Dinka immigrants into Nuerland have lost their status in their own kinship and lineage systems, and if they are not adopted into Nuer lineages they can only acquire status in Nuer society through affinal relationships; and their children, having no kin on the father's side, identify themselves with the mother's kin and, having no lineage on the father's side, seek affiliation to the mother's lineage. It is true that
621 614 we find strangers of Nuer clans as members of clusters of kin around a lineage core of the dominant clan of the tribe, but where the attachment is permanent these strangers are, in my experience, generally persons of those Nuer clans which have no tribal territory of their own—no *wec*, local community, as Nuer say—like the Jimem, Jikul, and Kiek clans. These clans have, moreover, in some cases mythological beginnings placing them outside the main family of Nuer clans and suggesting foreign origin. Assimilation in such cases can never be so complete as in the case of Dinka, because members of Nuer clans have their own clan symbols and their own *buth* relationships which attach them to the lineages of their birth.

000 Another factor which has certainly had some influence in

621 the ambition of every man, of the dominant clan especially, to become a 'bull' and the centre of a cluster of kin, and Nuer say that it is for this reason among others that families often break up and cousins and brothers part, each to seek to gather his own community around him.

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I suggest that it is the clear, consistent, and deeply rooted lineage structure of the Nuer which permits persons and families to move about and attach themselves so freely, for shorter or longer periods, to whatever community they choose by whatever cognatic or affinal tie they find it convenient to emphasize; and that it is on account of the firm values of the structure that this flux does not cause confusion or bring about social disintegration. It would seem it may be partly just because the agnatic principle is unchallenged in Nuer society that the tracing of descent through women is so prominent and matrilocality so prevalent. However much the actual configurations of kinship clusters may vary and change, the lineage structure is invariable and stable.

835 brothers are not just 'bulls' to one another, members of the same lineage. They are maternal kinsmen as well as paternal kinsmen, and in their case sexual relations with each other's sweethearts seem to the Nuer to involve in some way the mother, an idea which is repugnant to them.

These interpretations may be unacceptable to the reader. If so, he can disregard them without rejecting the main conclusion from which they are inferred. It is clear that the marriage prohibitions indicate kinship status and are one of the most effective means of doing this and thereby maintaining the kinship system, which is based on the distinctions between the various categories of relationships. They prevent confusion between one relationship and another and the contradictions such confusion would cause between the patterns of behaviour in which the relationships are expressed. This conclusion is contained in the statements, some of them recorded in this chapter, of Nuer themselves, who see that it is undesirable to obliterate or obscure the boundaries between kinship categories. Were marriage with the wife's sister permitted, to the child of it the mother's sister would also be the father's wife; and were a man to marry the daughter of an age-mate, his age-mate would also be his father-in-law.

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The bearing these regulations have on the kinship system will be seen in later chapters. I discussed their bearing on political structure and their relation to the lineage system in a few pages (pp. 225–8) in *The Nuer*. The argument there presented may be restated in a few sentences. Nuer political structure is a system of relations between territorial groups which express both their autonomy and their participation in the system in terms of lineage and clan affiliations. The local groups are organized into a common tribal structure through the association of clans with tribes, and the various lineages of these dominant clans in each tribe with the various sections and sub-sections of the tribe. Political structure is thus conceptualized in lineage structure. To play this part lineages must be both unique groups and at the same time must be identified with the local communities within which they function politically. Were they to lose entirely their uniqueness as descent groups the lineage structure in which the local communities see themselves as parts of a tribal organization would collapse. Were they not to merge in the network of kinship relations of which each local community is composed they would lack that cor-

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portentness which identification with residential groups gives them, and be an abstraction, since they are not corporate groups in their own right. A man acts sometimes as a lineage member, cutting himself off from the community of which he is part, but in ordinary social life he acts as a member of this community without reference to his exclusive lineage affiliation. In some situations values of descent determine his conduct, but in most situations it is determined by kinship values or by those community values which are an expression on a political plane of a sentiment created by corporate life comprised within a network of personal relations of a kinship order. This separation of the lineage from community life and its merging into it again is very largely brought about by the rules of exogamy which exclude marriage within the clan, thus giving that group distinctness, while compelling its lineages, by marrying outside the clan, to become multiple links in the network of kinship relations the strands of which form the texture of community life. Every Nuer local community thus becomes a community of kin, every member of which regulates his behaviour to every other member in accordance with a variety of kinship patterns and can predict their behaviour to himself in conformity with the same norms.

When a local community becomes in this way a network of kinship ties it is necessary, so varied and extensive are the relationships which come under the ban on marriage, to marry outside it, so that not only is the social autonomy of lineage groups prevented by the rules regulating marriage but also the social autonomy of residential groups. Kinship ties thus cross the gaps in political structure and unite members of opposed segments of it. Every political group of whatever size has a wider social setting outside its boundaries.

There is a tendency therefore for local communities to be groups of people who, being all interrelated in one way or another, must marry into a different local community. This happens because the Nuer make any kind of cognatic relationship to several degrees a bar to marriage and, at least so it seems to me, it is a bar to marriage because of the fundamental agnatic principle running through Nuer society. In any Nuer residential group, of whatever size, there is, as we have seen, a great variety of personal ties of a kinship order bringing its members into a texture of relationships, but the warp of the texture is the agnatic lineage

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and to it everyone attaches himself locally. If a man is not a member of the lineage with which he lives, he makes himself a member of it by treating a maternal link as though it was a paternal one or through affinal relationship. The lineage is thus in its corporate character a composite structure of cognatic branches and attachments in which the value of agnation is the integrating principle. The solidarity of a group of persons living together, and thereby the lineage structure which contains them, is maintained by emphasizing cognation in the rules of exogamy.

the next rite, and through it greater security. When the bride's 583
people consent to hold the next ceremony they express by so doing 602
their confidence in the final outcome. Marriage is not a single act. It is a succession of interconnected acts leading from courtship to the birth of children, and bridewealth is not a single payment but a succession of payments in response to the changing status of the wife and the increasing maturity of the union. As Nuer see it, these payments continue long after the marriage is fully established in the birth of calves and the progeny of these calves and of their progeny, a constant redocumentation which is balanced by the birth of children to the wife and of children to these children.

Bridewealth has so far been viewed as a means of organizing 583
personal relations between the husband and his people on one side 602
and the wife and her people on the other side. It has also a more 613
general structural function. When a woman is married she is transferred from one lineage to another. The husband alone has sex rights in her, but all his brothers and paternal cousins have residual sex rights in her, and his unmarried brothers may benefit from her labour as much as he does. The husband's exclusive marital privilege is recognized in the acknowledgement that he may claim damages for adultery. He has, of course, also rights in any children she may bear, but the children are not only his. They are children of his lineage. The rights of the husband and any of his kin living with him to the domestic services of his wife are evident in the performance of them and in the acceptance that he may correct her should she neglect them.

For the loss of their daughter, or rather of her children, her lineage receive cattle which enable them to obtain a wife from a third lineage to bear them children. When the daughters of these wives are married, the cattle received for them enter the kraals of the lineages to replace those which left them on the marriages of their mothers. In practice the total operation is not as simple as I have stated it because the cattle do not all go to one lineage but are partly distributed among the kinsmen of the bride's father and mother, but this is corrected by the fact that the cattle the father and paternal uncles do not receive on the marriage of their daughter come to them through other marriages in which they stand to the bride in other relationships. Hence it is that Nuer often speak of the lineage marrying a wife with its cattle or giving their daughter in marriage to another lineage for cattle. They say, for example, 583 602 613 that '*cieng* Pual have married a wife', or that '*cieng* Dumien have given their daughter in marriage'.

To understand the functions of bridewealth in Nuer society it is therefore necessary to view its payment in a wider social setting than is provided by any particular marriage. It is necessary to see it, as Nuer themselves do, as a series of transactions, and to perceive furthermore in an exchange of cattle for a wife an exchange 583 681 of a daughter for a wife. Bridewealth may be fruitfully compared from this point of view with bloodwealth, the payment of cattle in compensation for homicide. This is forty head of cattle, the same number as is paid for a bride, and the cattle are divided among the kinsmen of the dead man on the same plan of distribution as that obtaining in the distribution of bridewealth, though about half are reserved for marrying a wife to the name of the dead man to bear him a son. As bridewealth enables a woman to be replaced by a woman so bloodwealth enables a man to be replaced by a man. It is worthy of note that the rate of bloodwealth has fallen in recent times to about the same level as the rate of bridewealth. Nuer see the similarity between them, for I have heard them complain that the government was attempting to fix bloodwealth without fixing bridewealth at the same rate, whereas what the one is the other should be.

583 613 To see the Nuer custom of bridewealth in its structural perspective we must therefore think in terms of lineages. Children are attached by payment of bridewealth to the lineage of their father. They are 'children of the cattle' and therefore of the man in whose name they were paid, and they become joints in his branch of descent. The man in whose name the cattle were paid is always their pater, the legal or lineage father, whether he is their genitor or not. If he dies, the widow should be taken by one of her 'husbands' and the 'fathers' of his sons, that is to say, by one of his brothers. But even should a widow decline to cohabit with one of her husband's paternal kin and prefer to live as a concubine with some man unrelated to her dead husband, any children she may bear are his children. Every child must have a pater or, which is saying the same thing among the Nuer, belong to a lineage, and if an unmarried woman has a child it is legitimatized either by subsequent payment of bridewealth or by payment of a fee.

583 The two most important functions of bridewealth in Nuer society appear to me, therefore, to be its role in creating new social

601 on her lips, but then it means the people of her husband's home, for they have become her people, and she now identifies herself with them and not with her father's people. She uses in speaking to her husband's kin the same terms of address as he uses.

602 613 When a woman joins her husband she comes under the protection of his lineage spirits and ancestral ghosts, and when she builds a mud windscreen they are summoned by her husband's father to come and abide there. On the day she constructs it her father-in-law pours over it beer and butter and utters some of the pious formulae spoken on such occasions. When beer is brewed the wife pours a little at the side of the windscreen, and a sacrificial goat or sheep is often tethered there for the ghosts to see it before it is killed. When the woman who owns the hut has a grandchild, a *gat-nyade*, a son of her daughter, she sends for the boy to come and break down her windscreen and sacrifice a goat. Since a wife is accepted by the ghosts and spirits of her husband's lineage, she may perform ritual for that lineage in which invocation of its ghosts and spirits forms part.

But though a woman joins her husband's group and becomes part of it, she never entirely ceases to belong to her own family and lineage, under the protection of whose ghosts and spirits she remains. If she is ill treated by her husband she will ask her father and uncles and brothers to help her. On the other hand, should she in a quarrel with her husband disfigure him—knock a tooth out, for example—her father must pay him compensation. I have myself on two occasions seen a father pay a heifer to his son-in-law to atone for insults hurled at the husband's head by his wife when irritated by accusations of adultery.

602 I have given a short account of the conventional attitudes and patterns of behaviour Nuer regard as proper between relations-in-law. I repeat that for Nuer the relationships which contain these attitudes and patterns change in course of time into a kind of kin-relationship through the children to the marriage, and they might then perhaps be best described as kinship-in-law.

VI

601 So far I have been speaking about normal matrimony, the usual domestic union in Nuer society. There are, however, other forms of domestic union among the Nuer of which I now give an account.

I presented in Chapter I some genealogical tables to illustrate

583 called, is likewise paid to the genitor of daughters born in widow-concubinage, and if he acted also as foster-father to the bride and her brothers and sisters—'cut meat for them', as Nuer say—he may receive another two to four head of cattle of her bridewealth for having fostered the family. Also, when the daughter of his natural daughter is married, his legal son can claim a beast of the bridewealth. As I have explained, an adulterer may receive a cow on the marriage of his natural daughter, though I doubt if it is often paid.

There is no 'cow of the begetting' when the daughter of an unmarried concubine is married because the genitor by payment of a fee has made himself the pater also. 'The cattle of the father' go to him. As he is not the husband of the mother, 'the cattle of the mother', or some of them, may go to different kraals, because the bride's mother's sons have rights in them, and they may have been begotten and legitimatized by other men. For all these different cases I have stated only the principles of distribution of bridewealth. As I have explained earlier, actual distribution may be more complicated and depends on variable conditions. Among the Nuer these matters are discussed always in the idiom of cattle.

When a woman is married—that is to say, in all the cases we have considered except that of unmarried concubinage—division of the bridewealth of her daughters is determined by payment of bridewealth for herself. The person in whose name she was married with cattle is the pater of her children whether he begat them or not, was dead or alive at the time of her marriage and
[68] the birth of her children, or is a man or a woman. Hence it follows that agnatic descent is, by a kind of paradox, traced through the mother, for the rule is that in virtue of payment of bridewealth all who are born of her womb are children of her husband and therefore paternal kin, by whomsoever they may have been begotten. They may count as children of a man their mother has never even seen. They may have been begotten by several fathers, but they all
602 have the same pater. It is the fertility of the womb which a lineage
613 receives by payment of bridewealth. All children born of that
581 womb belong to the lineage; they are all agnates. This is a profoundly significant fact in Nuer society. It affects, among other things, the position of the family group in the kinship and lineage systems. The custom by which men in ghost-marriage and leviratic marriage raise up seed to their kinsmen subordinates the

exclusive interests of the family to those of the wider circles of the 602
paternal kin and of the lineage. The prevalence of widow-concu- 603
binage and simple concubinage also strengthens sentiments of 581
kinship, because there is in these cases no single undivided family, both legal and domestic, to demand a man's major allegiance at the expense of the solidarity of the wider kinship group which provides a boy with scope for his deepest interests and ambitions.

may have a byre if he is the eldest son of a dead man. When he is 592 initiated into manhood his paternal uncles ought to build him a byre, 'so that his father's fire may be relit', and to hand over to him his father's herd which they have held in trust till he should take his father's place as head of the family.

The wife has her hut at the side of the byre, and in a polygamous [195] family each wife has her own hut, where she and her children sleep. Near to it there may be a simple shelter for cooking. In a large homestead there may also be a hut for the youths of the household to sleep in, and perhaps a hut for the senior girls. The head of the family has no hut of his own but sleeps in the huts of his wives. In such a polygamous family all the huts of the wives are built around the byre, and this attachment symbolizes for Nuer what we call the agnatic principle of their society, which insists that all the sons of a man belong to his lineage irrespective of their maternal affiliations, their links with the kin of their mothers through the different huts within the homestead. Very early in life small boys are driven by their father or elder brothers away from their mothers' huts to the byre, the place of the menfolk of the family, where they eat, sleep, and spend the leisure hours of the day. When they are about seven or eight years of age they sleep there instead of in their mothers' huts, where the women and girls eat and sleep and near which they spend most of the day. The men and boys, to whichever hut they may belong, belong also, and primarily, to the byre and to its *gol*, a word which means, as I have earlier explained, the fire of cattle-dung kept burning day and night in the centre of the byre (there is sometimes a second one in the kraal) and its hearth; and also homestead, hamlet, family, household, and even lineage in certain contexts. Daughters belong to the huts and they will be married from them into stranger lineages, into which they are absorbed. Sons belong to the byre and to the lineage of its owner. This connexion between byre and lineage is seen when a new byre is built, (63) for then the master of ceremonies of the family is summoned to make a libation of beer to the guardian spirits and ancestral ghosts of the lineage before its central support is planted, so that they may give peace and prosperity to all who dwell therein. In the byre, at the side of the hearth, is kept a branch, decorated with metal rings and pieces of skins of sacrificed beasts, which serves as an ancestral shrine. In summer camps a windscreen takes the place

593 structure towards the father's kin and lineage, and a pull of personal affection towards the mother's people. Rights in the herd, duties of blood revenge, and status in the community hold a man to his father's kin, but with these go jealousy about cattle, resentment against authority, and personal rivalries. A man has no rights in his maternal uncle's herd, he has no obligation to assist his maternal uncle's people in their feuds, and he has no hereditary status in his maternal uncle's community. But the fact that he lacks these rights and duties and status means that he is not burdened with the disputes and tensions they engender. The paternal ties are stronger, if there is a touch of hardness in them. The maternal ties are weaker and for this reason are tenderer. In the Nuer family the tension is greatest in the case of the eldest child, especially an eldest son, for both families more strongly assert their rights in him than in the younger children, but it is inherent in the nature of the Nuer family and has also a more general social significance in the counter-attraction of the lineage on one side and the wider society on the other.

595 This pull in opposite directions, towards the father's kin and towards the mother's kin, is most evident in polygamous families, where the sons of each hut have different sets of kinsmen on the mother's side. I cannot say what is the frequency of polygamy in Nuer society, and it would in any case be difficult, in view of the variety of Nuer domestic unions, to decide on a criterion of polygamy; but though monogamous marriage is much commoner, polygamy is frequent enough to have set its stamp, through its association with wealth and social influence, on the lineage system. The polygamous family is for the Nuer the ideal form of family life and every man would like to attain to it. It has therefore importance out of all proportion to the actual number of such families. The values and the whole conception of the lineage system are reflected in it.

● 613 A Nuer lineage is often named after a woman, its ancestress, because lineages are generally thought of as dividing out from within a polygamous family. They cannot be differentiated by reference to the name of the father of the founders of the different lines of descent, but only by reference to the names of the founders themselves or of their mothers. Thus the typical lineage structure is conceived of as [illegible] present in the structure of the polygamous family and in the [illegible] of huts in the homestead it occupies.

This is why a lineage is generally called a *thok dwiel*, the entrance 613
to the hut—not the byre—or a *thok mac*, the hearth of the fire at which women cook—not that around which men sit and sleep.

There is involved here a contradiction between the dogma of the 593
unity of brothers, which the Nuer so often enunciate, and both the lineage system and the common experience of family life. It is a cardinal teaching that all brothers are equal and undivided, for they are all sons of the same father and therefore, through their identification with him, equivalent in the lineage. Maternal descent does not count within the lineage and therefore ought not to count within the family, for by the agnatic principle in Nuer social life the family derives from the father. Hence, Nuer say, if your uterine brother and your paternal half-brother quarrel you must not enter the dispute on your uterine brother's side, because by so doing you divide the family. You split, as it were, the father.

That the huts do not divide the byre is particularly emphasized 593
by, and in, the rule, previously referred to in our discussion of 592
bridewealth, that brothers must marry in order of seniority of birth, a division by age reinforced by the distinctions of the age-set system, irrespective of whether in each marriage the cattle of the bridewealth came into the family herd from the previous marriages of the particular brother's full or half-sisters. Also, all the brothers must marry before any one of them takes a second wife. Even after the father is dead, opinion enforces this rule. It is only when, as rarely happens, there are enough cattle for a further marriage from the herd before the younger brothers are old enough to take wives that an elder brother may marry a second wife before they are married. When a man dies his eldest son takes his place as head of the family: 'He changes himself into something like their father.' It is then his duty to see that his unmarried brothers are not unfairly treated. Should the family disperse and one of the brothers attempt to take for himself all 'the cattle of the mother' of his uterine sisters' marriages, and refuse to allow them to be used for the marriage of a half-brother who is the senior of the unmarried sons of the family, it might prove difficult to prevent his doing so; but were he to do so, he would cut himself off from his brothers and paternal kinsmen. They would not any more assist him in his troubles and quarrels. 'They may even let him be killed unaided and recoup themselves for his past meanness

835 recorded in this essay.[1] Nor can I discuss at the length required the political implications of Nuer exogamous rules. I have devoted a few pages in *The Nuer*[2] to this aspect of them, the argument of which may be presented here in a few sentences.
621 The Nuer political structure was treated in that book as a system
619 of relations between territorial groups which express both their
●613 autonomy and their participation in the system in terms of
614 lineage and clan affiliations. The local groups are organized into a common tribal structure through the association of clans with tribes, and the various lineages of these dominant clans in each tribe with the various sections and sub-sections of the tribe. Political structure is conceptualized in lineage structure. To play this part lineages must be both unique groups and at the same time be identified with local communities within which they function politically. Were they to lose entirely their uniqueness as descent groups the lineage structure in which the local communities see themselves as parts of a tribal organization would collapse. Were they not to merge in the network of kinship relations of which each local community is composed they would lack that corporateness which identification with residential groups gives them and be an abstraction, since they are not corporate groups in their own right. A man acts sometimes as a lineage member, cutting himself off from the community of which he is part, but in ordinary social life he acts as a member of this community without reference to his exclusive lineage affiliation. In some situations values of descent determine his conduct but in most situations it is determined by kinship values or by those community values which are an expression on a political plane of a sentiment created by a network of personal relations within the kinship system. This separation of the lineage from community life and its merging into it again is very largely brought about by the rules of exogamy which exclude marriage within the clan, thus giving that group distinctness, while compelling its lineages, by marrying outside the clan, to become multiple links in the network of kinship relations the strands of which form the texture of community life. Every Nuer local community thus becomes a

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[1] Information on these subjects will be found in my papers: 'Nuer Bridewealth', *Africa*, xvi. 4 (1946); 'Nuer Marriage Ceremonies', ibid. xviii. 1 (1948); and *Some Aspects of Marriage and the Family among the Nuer*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers No. 11 (1945).

[2] *The Nuer*, Oxford: Clarendon Press (1940), pp. 225-8.

community of kindred every member of which regulates his 621
behaviour to every other member in accordance with a variety 619
of kinship patterns and can predict their behaviour to himself 613
in conformity with the same norms. 614

When a local community becomes in this way a network of 582
kinship ties it is necessary, so varied and extensive are the re- 602
lationships which come under the exogamous ban, to marry 621
outside it, so that not only is the social autonomy of lineage groups prevented by the rules regulating marriage but also the social autonomy of residential groups. Kinship ties thus cross the gaps in political structure and unite members of opposed segments of it. Every political group of whatever size has a wider social setting outside its boundaries.

Local communities become therefore groups of people who, being all interrelated in one way or another, must marry into a different local community. This happens because the Nuer make any kind of cognatic relationship to several degrees a bar to marriage and, at least so it seems to me, it is a bar to marriage because of the fundamental agnatic principle running through Nuer society. In any Nuer residential group, of whatever size, there is a great variety of personal ties of a kinship order bringing its members into a texture of relationships, but the warp of the texture is the agnatic lineage and to it everyone attaches himself locally. If a man is not a member of the lineage with which he lives he makes himself a member of it by, in one way or another, treating a maternal link as though it was a paternal one. The lineage is thus in its corporate character a composite structure of cognatic branches and attachments in which the value of agnation is the integrating principle. The solidarity of a group of persons living together, and thereby the lineage structure which contains them, is maintained by emphasizing cognation in the rules of exogamy.

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619 ancestor of the dominant clan, from the name of his favourite bull, or having some mythical origin.[1]

The tribe is therefore a unit of society bound by ties resulting from common residence, by the possession of a common territory, by a network of kinship and other social links in relation to the dominant clan from which it takes its name, by the need for mutual defence against external aggression and for co-operation in warfare against other tribes and peoples.

619 Each tribe is further divided into primary tribal segments, these again into secondary segments, and these into tertiary segments, the
●613 lines of cleavage usually but not always following the segmentation of the lineages of the dominant clan. As an example, the primary and secondary segments of the Gaawar tribe are shown in the diagram (Fig. 1).

Within each tribe only a small proportion of the people has the genuine right to claim direct descent from the original ancestor from whom the tribal name is derived. The majority are descended from later immigrants from other parts of Nuerland, or from Dinka accretions absorbed by the fiction of adoption into Nuer society. Genuine descendants are termed *diel*,[2] although this term is rarely used except in a context where the distinction is necessary, for the *diel* do not enjoy any great or noticeable privileges which distinguish them from other lineages which are called *rul*. The distinction exists only within the tribe and within its component segments. Beyond tribal boundaries it no longer has any significance. A Gaawar Nuer, a true descendant of War, is only *diel* within that tribe; he would be *rul* if he lived in Thiang country. Likewise a descendant of the dominant lineage in Thiang would be *rul* in Gaawar. A more common distinction made by the Nuer is between *gaat tutni* (sing. *gat tut*),[3] the 'sons of bulls', the descendants of the male line dominant in that area, and *gaat nyiet* (sing. *gat nyal*), the 'sons of daughters', i.e. descendants through the female line and by this means attached to the dominant lineage. Others can claim marital relationships and refer to the dominant lineage as *ji cieng thu*, 'in-laws' or more literally, 'people of the in-laws' home', or *gaat nar*, 'mother's brother's sons', so that there is throughout a network of such relationships which provides explanation for political association and occupation of a common territory.

The political significance of the clan system is to be found in its association with the territorial segments of the tribe. The clan is itself

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[1] For example, the Gaawar call themselves *gaat gan War* 'the sons of the sons of W[illegible] Thiang refers to the bull-name of an ancestor, while *ji baaw* (Jikany), the 'people of [illegible] gourd', refers to the twin birth of their original ancestor to a gourd together with the ancestor of the Ngok Dinka. Jagei, 'people of Gei or Gee', and so on.

[2] Professor Evans-Pritchard calls the *diel* 'aristocratic lineages'. This is an apt enough description provided it is remembered that there is no class distinction.

[3] A term now used to mean Government 'headmen'.

segmented, its lineages usually corresponding to the segmentation of the tribe, but this correspondence is not always exact. Thus in Gaawar the Bang, Caam, and Gaatkwa segments are by origin offshoots of the Per lineage, but whereas Per is a segment of the Radh primary segment,

FIGURE I

The Segmentation of the Gaawar Tribe

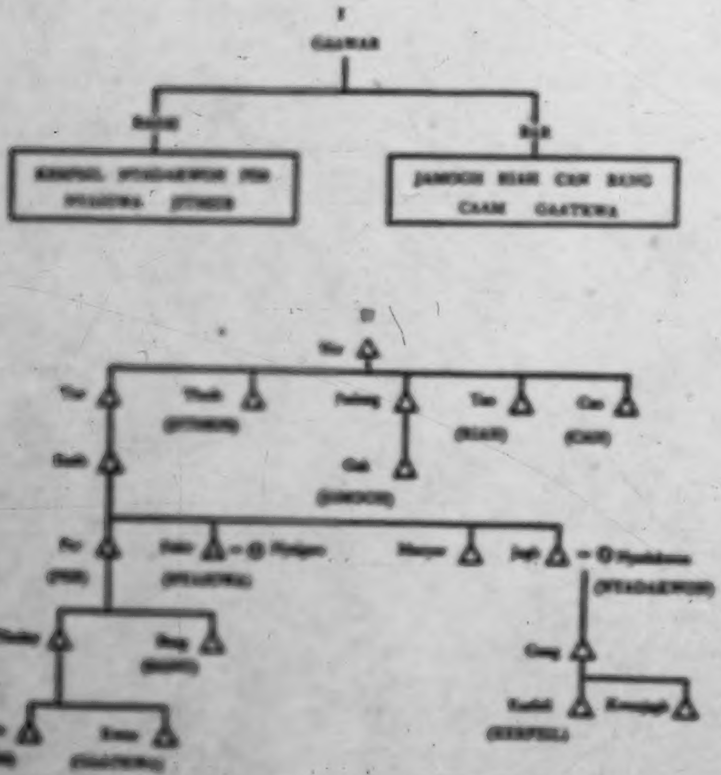

Table I shows the primary and secondary segments of the tribe as they are grouped in political and territorial association. Table II shows the actual genealogies cited by the Gaawar to explain these associations. It will be noted that the segmentation does not entirely correspond with local connexions, since Cieng Bang, Cieng Caam, and Cieng Gaatkwa derive from Cieng Per, one of the main secondary segments of Radh.

the former are all segments of the Bar primary segment. There is no conflict of loyalty involved, for kinship allegiance is sufficiently

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remote to be overshadowed by territorial association. If there were an occasion when the whole of Radh found themselves ranged against Bar, the Bang, Caam, and Gaatkwa segments would follow Bar rather than Radh.

The territorial segments of a Nuer tribe have the same characteristics as the tribe itself, viz. a common sentiment strengthened by tradition and mythology, exclusive rights in land and common occupation of a recognized territory, mutual co-operation in certain economic activities and in warfare both offensive and defensive, and a common name derived from a central lineage. With these characteristics in common, and generally speaking the smaller the segment, the greater the reality and meaning of such characteristics, primary segments are segments of a tribe, secondary segments are segments of a primary segment, and tertiary segments are segments of secondary segments. Finally a tertiary segment is divided into a number of villages and villages into basic domestic units represented in the homesteads which are also family groups. The smaller the unit, the more nearly it corresponds with a kinship group.

The Meaning of the word cieng

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The word *cieng* is normally used to describe these segments of society but, like the segments themselves, is a reflection of structural relativity. Hence it is a term which leads to much confusion among Europeans unacquainted with the social structure of the Nuer. I can do no better than quote some remarks of Professor Evans-Pritchard on this subject because they provide a key to an understanding of Nuer society and hence to an understanding of modes of behaviour, social relations, and also of legal concepts, which are the subject of this book.

> When a Nuer speaks of his *cieng*, his *dhor*, his *gol*, &c., he is conceptualizing his feelings of structural distance, identifying himself with a local community, and, by so doing, cutting himself off from other communities of the same kind. An examination of the word *cieng* will teach us one of the most fundamental characteristics of Nuer local groups and, indeed, all social groups: their structural relativity. What does a Nuer mean when he says 'I am a man of such and such a *cieng*'? *Cieng* means 'home', but its precise significance varies with the situation in which it is spoken. If one meets an Englishman in Germany and asks him where his home is, he may reply that it is England. If one meets the same man in London and asks him the same question, he will tell one that his home is in Oxfordshire, whereas if one meets him in that county, he will tell one the name of the town or village in which he lives. If questioned in his town or village he will mention his particular street, and if questioned in his street he will indicate his house. So it is with the Nuer. A Nuer met outside Nuerland says that his home is *cieng* Nath, Nuerland. He may also refer to his tribal country as his *cieng*, though the more usual expression for this is *rol*. If one asks him in his tribe what is his *cieng*, he will name his village or tribal section according to the context. Generally he will name either his tertiary tribal section or his village, but he may give his primary

619 segments or with two tribes. The tribal system as defined by sociological analysis can, therefore, only be said to approximate to any simple diagrammatic presentation. A tribe is an exemplification of a segmentary tendency which is characteristic of the political structure as a whole. The reason why we speak of Nuer political groups, and of the tribe in particular, as relative groups and state that they are not easily described in terms of political morphology, is that political relations are dynamic. They are always changing in one direction or another. The most evident movement is towards fission. The tendency of tribes and tribal sections towards fission and internal opposition between their parts is balanced by a tendency in the direction of fusion, of the combination or amalgamation of groups. This tendency towards fusion is inherent in the segmentary character of Nuer political structure, for, although any group tends to split into opposed parts, these parts tend to fuse in relation to other groups. Hence fission and fusion are two aspects of the same segmentary principle and the Nuer tribe and its divisions are to be understood as a relation between these two contradictory, yet complementary, tendencies. Physical environment, way of livelihood, mode of distribution, poor communications, simple economy, &c., to some extent explain the incidence of political cleavage, but the tendency towards segmentation seems to be inherent in political structure itself.

III. Lineage System

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[614] Tribal unity cannot be accounted for by any of the facts we have so far mentioned, taken alone or in the aggregate, but only by reference to the lineage system. The Nuer clan is not an undifferentiated group of persons who recognise their common kinship, as are many African clans, but is highly segmented. The segments are genealogical structures, and we therefore refer to them as lineages and to the clan as an exogamous system of lineages which trace their descent to a common ancestor. The defining characteristic of a lineage is that the relationship of any member of it to other members can be exactly stated in genealogical terms. His relationship to members of other lineages of the same clan is, therefore, also known, since lineages are genealogically related. Thus, in the diagram below, A is a clan which is segmented into maximal lineages B and C and these again bifurcate

into major lineages D, E, F, and G. In the same manner, minor 619
lineages H, I, J, and K are segments of major lineages E and F; 613
and L, M, N, and O are minimal lineages which are segments of
minor lineages H and J. The whole clan is a genealogical structure, [614]
i.e. the letters represent persons to whom the clan and its segments trace their descent, and from whom they often take their names. There must be at least twenty such clans in Nuerland, without taking into account many small lineages of Dinka origin.

The Nuer lineage is a group of agnates, and comprises all living persons descended, through males only, from the founder of that particular line. Logically, *it* also includes dead persons descended from the founder, but these dead persons are only significant in that their genealogical position explains the relationship between the living. The wider agnatic kinship is recognised the further back descent has to be traced, so that the depth of a lineage is always in proportion to its width.

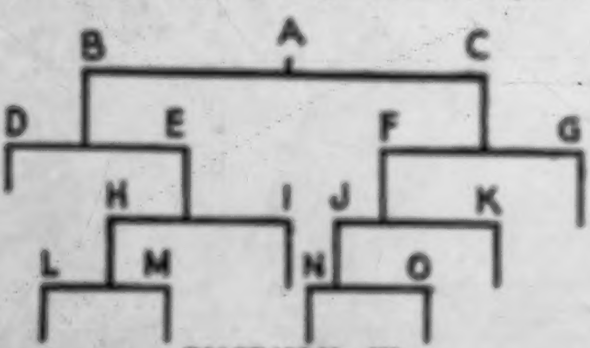


DIAGRAM No. III

The Nuer clan, being thus highly segmented, has many of the 613
characteristics which we have found in tribal structure. Its lineages are distinct groups *only* in relation to each other. Thus, in the diagram, M is a group only by opposition to L, H is a group only by opposition to I, D is a group only by opposition to E, and so on. There is always *fusion* of collateral lineages of the same branch in relation to a collateral branch, e.g. in the diagram, L and M are no longer separate minimal lineages, but are a single minor lineage, H, in opposition to I, and D and E are no longer separate major lineages, but are a single maximal lineage, B, in opposition to C. Hence two lineages which are equal and opposite are composite in relation to a third, so that a man is a member of a lineage in relation

● 613 to a certain group and not a member of it in relation to a different group. Lineages are thus essentially relative groups, like tribal sections, and, like them, also are dynamic groups. Therefore they can only be described satisfactorily in terms of values and situations.

613 621 Nuer lineages are not corporate localized communities though their members often have an association with a locality and speak of the locality as though it were an exclusive agnatic group. Every Nuer village is associated with a lineage, and though the members of it often comprise a small proportion of the community, it is identified with them in such a way that we may speak of it as an aggregate of persons clustered around an agnatic nucleus. The aggregate is linguistically identified with the nucleus by the designation of the village community by the name of the lineage. It is only in reference to rules of exogamy and certain ritual activities that one needs to regard lineages as completely autonomous groups. In social life generally, they function within local communities, of all sizes from the village to the tribe, and as part of them. We cannot here discuss the ways by which residential groups become a network of kinship ties—marriage, adoption, and various fictions—but the result tends to be that a local group is a cognatic cluster round an agnatic core, the rules of exogamy being the operating principle in this tendency.

614 Nuer clans are everywhere much dispersed, so that in any village or camp one finds representatives of diverse clans. Small lineages have moved freely over Nuerland and have settled here and there and have aggregated themselves to agnatically unrelated elements in local communities. Migration and the absorption of Dinka have been circumstances favouring the dispersal and mixture of clans. Being a conquering, pastoral people and not [769] having an ancestral cult, the Nuer have never been bound to any particular spot by necessity or sentiment.

Nevertheless, there is a straight relation between political structure and the clan system, for a clan, or a maximal lineage, is associated with each tribe, in which it occupies a dominant position among other agnatic groups. Moreover, each of its segments tends to be associated with a segment of the tribe in such a way that there is a correspondence, and often a linguistic identification, between the parts of a clan and the parts of a tribe. Thus if we compare Diagrams I[a] and III[b] and suppose clan A to be the dominant clan in tribe B, then maximal lineages B and C correspond to primary

a[see p. 282, col. 776 --Analyst]
b[see p. 288, col. 888 --Analyst]

612 as you can ask a *Zande*, for example, "*Ngbwatungaro nga da?*" You
[28] get at his clan by degrees, if you get at it at all, by asking a man what is his *thok mac* or *thok dwiel* (the hearth of his fire or the entrance to his hut). In my experience the latter expression is the more common and I will use it here. The reader will observe that it is analogous in its literal and extended meanings to the Arabic *khashm el bet*. A man's *thok dwiel* are all those persons of either sex who can trace their descent through males exclusively to a common ancestor. *Thok dwiel* is, therefore, a relative term since its extension depends on the particular person who is selected as the point of departure. Thus if we begin with the father then the *thok dwiel* will include only sons and daughters, but if we take the grandfather as our point of departure it will include all his sons and daughters and the children of his sons. A larger and larger number of agnates (persons related through the male line exclusively) will be included in the term *thok dwiel* the higher up the line of ascent we take the point of departure. Now the Nuer does not generally, if ever, refer to the group of father and children as a *thok dwiel*. These people, together with the mothers, form so obviously a family and household (*gol*). *Thok dwiel* of a man means essentially his father's kinsmen and the only question is how far back the Nuer goes up the line of ascent before he hits on an ancestor whose descendants in the male line he includes in his notion of kin. The answer to this question is complicated since there is no invariable rule in the matter and since the notion of kin is relative, more people being included in some contexts than in others by the same speaker.

613 Thus in diagram No. IV W, X, Y, and Z are four sons of S and they sleep in their father's kraal and form part of his family and household (*gol*). Many years later we return to their country and we find that S is long since dead and that his sons, W, X, Y, and Z, have each a family of their own. We may now speak of W, X, Y, and Z, with their sons and daughters as forming a *thok dwiel*, which would be called after S, their common ascendant. In the terminology employed in this paper we would speak of the lineage of S since we are using the term lineage to denote the unilateral group of agnatic kin which the Nuer calls his *thok dwiel*. If you ask any member of this line of descent from S what is his lineage, he will reply that he belongs to the house (*cieng*) of S. Here again it is necessary to re-emphasise that in saying that he belongs

to *cieng* S, he is using the term for " house " or " home " or " village " in the sense of " lineage " or " genealogical relationship through the father." Hence the fact that a man tells you that he belongs to *cieng* S does not prove that he is descended from S since it may merely imply, as explained earlier in this essay, that he is now living in the same village as the descendants of S. If you wish to make quite certain whether he means that he is descended from S or is merely a member of the locality of his descendants it is advisable to ask subsidiary questions to establish his descent beyond all doubt. Thus, if a man tells you that he is a member of *cieng* S in answer to your question, " What is your *thok dwiel ?* " you can then ask him whether the line of descent through males from S is his true lineage (*thok dwillun pany*) or whether his family are of different descent and have simply aggregated themselves to the lineage from S. You try to establish his real origin (*kwackien*=their reeds or clan origins). 6/3

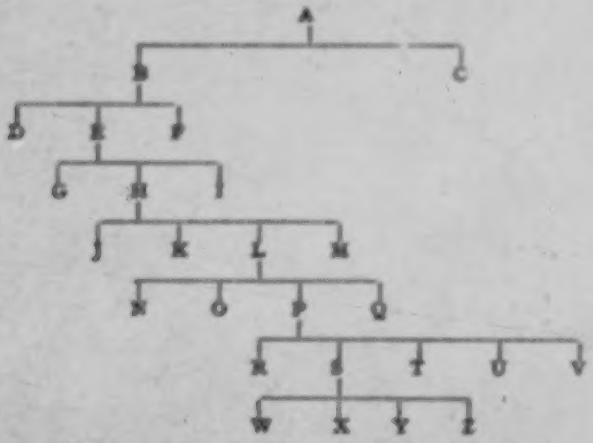
Hence one's questions take something like the following order :—

Codu coal edi ?	What is your name ?
Coda coal e Nhial	Ny name is Nhial.
e jin ram cieng nga ?	What is your village ?
ghan ran cieng Muot Dit	I come from Muot Dit village.
wecdun e wec nga ?	Which is your cattle camp ?
wecda e wec Titcuong	My camp is the camp of Titcuong.
e jin gat nga ?	Who is your father ?
ghan gat Titcuong	My father is Titcuong.
thok dwillun e mith ?	Which is your lineage ?
thok dwillan e Cieng Rue	Our lineage is the RUE lineage.
Cieng Rue babdien coaledi ?	What is the lineage of which the RUE lineage forms part ?
babdien e cieng Nyajekany	They form a lineage of the NYAJEKANY lineage.
Cieng Rue e thok dwillun pany ?	Is the RUE lineage your real lineage ?

In the sense in which we speak of " the S lineage " (the lineage from S), 6/3 his brothers R, T, U, and V, and their descendants are excluded from it. On the other hand, R, T, U, and V, and their descendants are all of the same lineage as S if we take as our point of departure for denominating the lineage an ancestor higher up the line of ascent than S. In point of fact our Nuer (let us suppose he is a son of Z) would be unlikely to give

6/3 his lineage from S since S is only his grandfather. He might do so, but he would be more likely to choose someone higher up in ascent. Thus, if he says that he is a member of the lineage of P then he counts in his lineage all the descendants of R, S, T, U, and V, through the male line (*i.e.*, themselves, their sons and daughters and their sons' sons and daughters). If he says that he is a member of the *thok dwiel* of L then he includes all the descendants of N, O, P, and Q, through the male line, in his lineage.

Diagram No. IV.



(All the persons represented on this diagram are males.)

Seen diagrammatically this seems a very simple exposition, but it is hard to understand when one is living among the Nuer. This is chiefly due to the fact that the Nuer make use of a word like *cieng* or *thok dwiel* to describe a number of things which we need to distinguish more precisely by use of varied terminology, but it is also due to difficulty in grasping the intricacies of the Nuer genealogical system. Nuer usages are easier to understand if English terms are employed to describe social groups instead of native terms and if the essential characters of the lineage are constantly borne in mind. A lineage is a group of agnates, i.e., everyone descended through the male line from a given individual. A man cannot, therefore, be a member of his mother's lineage.[1] A woman

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[1] Except when a woman founds a line of descent, a feature not dealt with in this paper. Even then descent is traced through males to the ancestress of the lineage.

613 is a member of her father's lineage, but her children are of her husband's lineage, hence a woman and her children belong to different lineages—*mulier est finis familiae*. A lineage, moreover, is not a loose group of people with mutual but undifferentiated relationship, each member extending to all the other members a vague preferential treatment, as is the case with many African clans, but it is a compact group of persons the relationship of any one of whom is different to each other member of the lineage. The exact genealogical position of each member of a lineage in respect to each other member is easily traceable in the network of its genealogical system. Thus, two men, whom we will call A and B, are any two members of the same lineage, but A is not simply B's fellow clansman, his lineal peer, but is related to him by a succession of steps which can be followed by anyone familiar with the ascent of both, *i.e.*, A is perhaps B's father's father's father's brother's son's son's son. We must remember, besides, about the Nuer lineages that many of their members appear by adoption and not by birth and it will be explained later how Dinka captives are incorporated into Nuer lineages by adoption. Lastly, we have to stress the fact that a lineage is always a relative term since it depends upon how far up the line of ascent the ancestor, from whom all members of the lineage are descended, is chosen. Hence, two
618 lineages which are separate and opposite in relation to each other are
614 single and composite in relation to a third. Every male Nuer is (1) a member of his father's lineage, and (2) the potential founder of a lineage of his own. In fact, however, not every Nuer reaches the dignity of being regarded after his death as the founder of their lineage by his descendants and they will not necessarily call their village after his name. Here and there in a group of brothers and cousins one man or one line of descent proves dominant and gives his name to the village in which they all live. The descendants of his brothers and cousins as well as quite unrelated people who have come to live in that village now speak of themselves as members of *cieng* so-and-so and owing to the tendency, which I have already noticed, for the kin who live together to become identified with the village in which they live, all villagers tend to speak as though they have a common lineage even when their claims are quite fictitious. In the case of descendants of brothers of the man after whom the village is called there is, however, a definite merging of the kin into one lineage. In this situation the brothers are regarded

613 as though they were equivalent. Many collateral lines are lost by this
614 process of merging in which they come to regard one of their ancestors as though he was the common ancestor of them all.

I shall refer in this paper to major lineages and minor lines. A certain degree of latitude must attach to these expressions since it is impossible, owing to their variations, to use them with complete precision. By minor lineage I mean the ancestor to whom the Nuer refers in answer to your question, what is his *thok dwiel*, i.e., the first descendant in their common line of descent to whom a large number of families refer as their common ancestor and whose name is the name after which their village or district is called. Thus a large number of families in the Lou tribe will tell you, if you ask them what is the name of their *thok dwiel*, that they are members of a *cieng* PUAL (in this sense meaning that they are members of the PUAL lineage). Some of the families may sometimes speak of themselves as members of a lineage called after some ascendant nearer to them than Pual, but this is generally because in the special context in which they are speaking they are contrasting their section of PUAL lineage with another section. On the whole, the normal designation for all these families is *cieng* PUAL and the first emphasis placed upon any ancestor by present-day Nuer of these families is placed upon Pual. By major lineage I mean a larger lineage of which a minor lineage forms only one line of descent among other lines of descent from the same ancestor. Thus Pual is not only the founder and highest ascendant of the lineage called after him, but he is himself the descendant of another lineage. Having discovered that your informant is really a member of PUAL lineage (*see* diagrams Nos. V and VII) and is not merely a man of different descent living among them in their village you can ask him what is the *bab* of *cieng* PUAL, *i.e.*, what is the greater lineage from which the PUAL lineage springs. Your informant will reply that the PUAL lineage forms a section of the GAATBAL lineage and this is what I shall call the major lineage. You can continue to question your informant along these lines by asking him what is the *bab* (the greater lineage) to which the major lineage of the GAATBAL belongs, what is the trunk, as it were, out of which this branch grows. In this particular case your informant will tell you that the GAATBAL are children of Denac, the founder of the clan of the JINACA, but in other cases, your informant may give you a further major lineage before he reaches the clan or main trunk

12:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1930-1931) 1933

EJ22 Nuer FJ22

PLATE VI.

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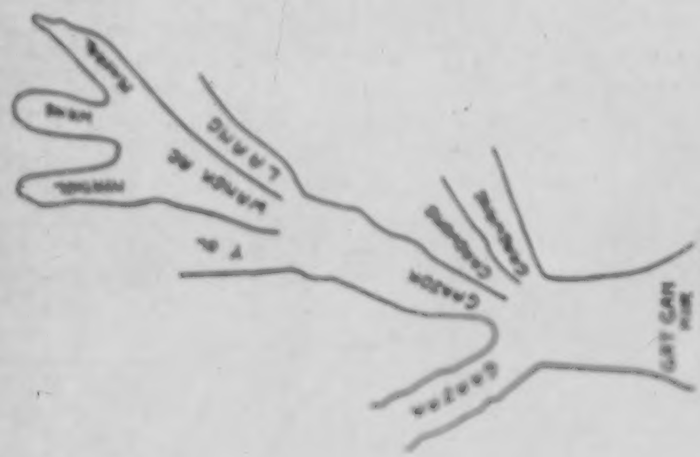
GAT GAN KIIR
GAAJOK
LAANG
NYAL

Diagram No. VI.
TREE OF DESCENT OF GAAT GAN KIIR LINEAGE.

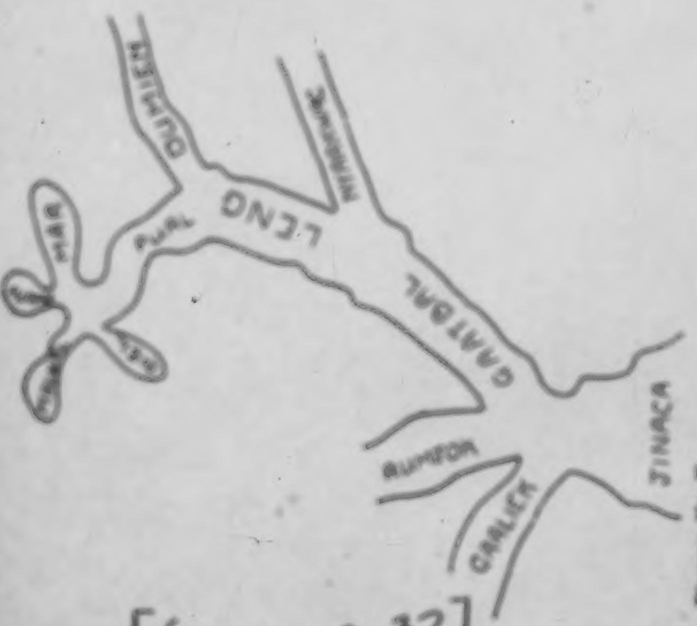
JINACA
GAALIECK
RUMJOK
GAATBAL
NYARKWAC
LENG
DUMIEN
PUAL
MAR

Diagram No. V.
TREE OF DESCENT OF GAATNACA LINEAGE.

[facing p. 32].

613 from which the different lineages branch out. Similarly, he might have 614 given you a smaller minor lineage before giving you *cieng* PUAL in answer to your first question, what is his *thok dwiel*; *e.g.* he might have said that he was a member of the KWOOTH or MALUAL lineages (shown in the accompanying tree, diagram No. II). Each lineage is a branch in relation to the twigs which shoot out from it, but is a twig of the larger branch from which it sprang. The following two trees of descent are appended to illustrate graphically the Nuer system of lineages. One represents a JINACA (Lou tribe) lineage and the other a GAT GAN KIIR (Jekany tribes) lineage. In each diagram only one line of descent is shown from the roots to the twigs, from the clan ancestor to the families of to-day, but the other main branches and boughs, the other major and minor lineages, are indicated where they leave the stem.

These trees and genealogical tables may be compared with the maps (Nos. III, IV, and V)[1] which show the distribution of tribal sections among the Lou tribe and the Eastern Jekany tribes.

614
619 The descendants of Nyaang, son of Denac, form the nucleus of the Gaaliek primary section; the descendants of Bal, sons of Denac, form the nucleus of the Gaatbal primary section; the descendants of Dak, son of Denac, form the nucleus of the Rumjok primary section. The only sections shown on the map which are not accounted for in the genealogical tree and table are the Jaajoak and Jimac sections which have clan nuclei of foreign origin.

We must guard against thinking that because most of the Lou primary sections are called after sons of Denac that they are solely composed of these lineages. This would be a serious error, as in all probability true descendants from Denac in these sections are in a small minority. Large foreign lineages are included in the areas designated by a title taken from any of the sons of Denac (e.g., the THIANG lineage in the Gaatbal primary section) and there are innumerable families of stranger (Nuer) and Dinka descent clustered around families of true GAATNACA origin. Thus, if one visits the villages or cattle camps owned by minor lineages which spring from the GAALIEK major lineage, the lineages of LÖNGNGUÄR, NYAANEN, KUOOK, one will find them occupied by a relatively small number of members of these lineages while most of the residents will be found to have sprung from other Nuer and Dinka clans.

[1] [See facing pp. 10, 18, 30, category 116.--Analyst]

12;Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1930-1931) 1933
F J22 Nuer F J22

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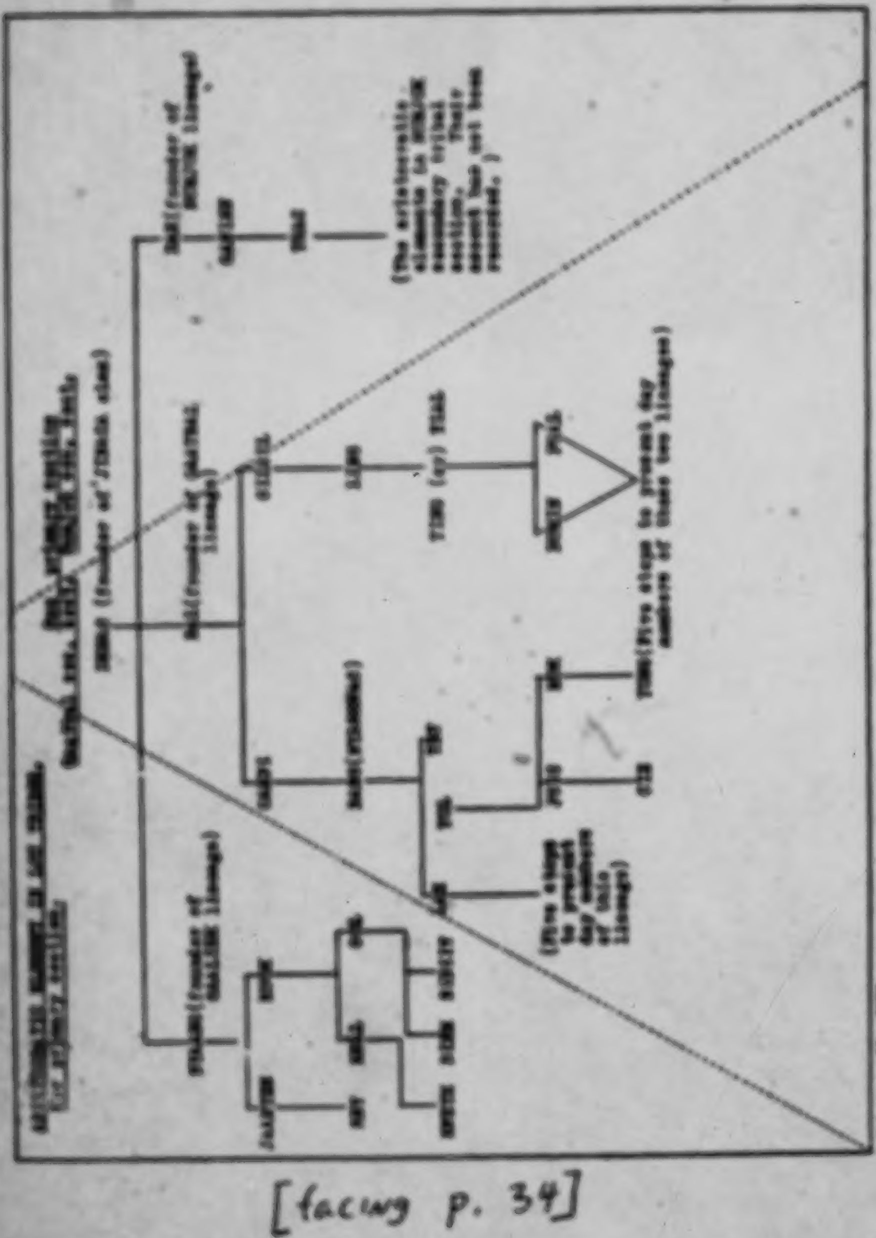
ARISTOCRATIC ELEMENT IN LOU TRIBE.
Gun primary section
(founder of JINAKA clan)
(founder of ... lineage)
TIDO (or) TIAL
(Five steps to present day members of this lineage)
(Five steps to present day members of these two lineages)
(The aristocratic elements in ... secondary tribal section. Their descent has not been recorded.)

Diagram No. VII.

[facing p. 34]

614 their common kinship by a common sentiment towards the clan name and ritual symbols and by the prohibition of marriage between their [614] families. But when they belong to the same minor lineage they recognise their kinship by awareness of the exact relationship in which they stand to one another in the genealogical system. Nevertheless any competent Nuer genealogist can, if pressed, produce a good table of genealogical ascent to the founder of his clan with the result that it is possible, even in such a huge clan as the GAT GAN KIIR of the Jekany tribes, to place every single clansman and clanswoman on a single genealogical chart showing their genealogical descent from Kir and, therefore, the genealogical relationship of any clansman to any other clansman. Such a chart would not be likely to embody a correct genealogy, but it would be recognised by the Nuer as being substantially correct.

614
619 Consequently one cannot say that relationship ends with the clan or that it is the largest of Nuer lineages, but we have to define it as the largest exogamous lineage. For the common ancestor of most Nuer clans is the same person. Jackson has given a very good account of the way in which the Nuer clans are part of a related system which I propose to call the Family of Nuer Clans. It is necessary to say that it is not at all clear from Jackson's or other accounts, including my own notes, how this family of clans are inter-related. It is particularly a problem which requires detailed research among the "Homeland Nuer" to the west of the Nile. One of the reasons why it is difficult to draw more than an approximate tree of the Family of Nuer Clans is the confusion which has always existed between the tribe and the clan, with the inevitable result that when we are told that Lou or Lak are sons of such-and-such an ancestor we are helpless, since tribesmen of Lou and Lak form political aggregates of composite ancestry and cannot possibly have common ancestors. What is meant is that the dominant clan element of the tribe are the sons of the such-and-such an ancestor, but as his tree of descent is not given it is difficult to proceed upon such a supposition.

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773
774] I will condense here the main discoveries of Mr. Jackson in this field, together with the writings of the late Capt. Fergusson and notes taken by myself. There figure in all accounts certain mythical persons who link the ancestors of the Nuer clans to Kwoth, God, who made them and from whom they are directly descended. In this essay the first persons we need notice are Gee and Ghaak, two brothers who are possibly to be

619 sons Bany (bull(ock) name *ma low*), Yini (bull(ock) name *ma rengyan*) and 614 Thiang, a genealogy which differs from those already given in this paper. Only detailed research by several observers in different areas can finally solve the problems, for solutions cannot be deduced satisfactorily from our present data.

In our account of the tribe we explained how a continual process of fission is going on and how when we speak of a tribe we are using a relative term, since it is difficult to know whether we should speak of a single tribe with moieties or of two separate tribes. Exactly the same process of segmentation is going on within the clan, since a tribe is a political aggregation around a clan or clan lineage. Thus the clan, like its political superstructure the tribe, is also going through a constant process of integration and segmentation. Division into lineages here corresponds with territorial division into tribal sections. Our statement that the larger the territorial area covered by a tribe or a tribal segment the weaker its cohesion finds its kinship counterpart in the tendency for the solidarity of a lineage to weaken the more it expands. Weakening bonds of kinship re-enforce spacial division in destroying communal interests in tribal life just as spacial division re-enforces widening kinship breaches in undermining community of blood. For example, the division of the Lou into two moieties of Mor and Gun is not simply a political and spacial division but is also a kinship cleavage between the descendants of three sons of Denac, Nyang, Dak and Bal, or to state the position in other terms, the division between the sons of Nyang, Dak, and Bal is not simply a creation of genealogical distance but also of political and spacial distance.

618 614 621 The clan itself has practically no social cohesion; a major lineage has greater cohesion than the clan of which it forms part but less cohesion than one of the minor lineages into which it is divided. A minor lineage has great solidarity as has the village or district which represents the minor lineage with its political aggregate clustered around it. Here close ties of blood are backed up by community of daily life. Thus the GAT NACA display little communal feeling in their social behaviour, the major lineage of GAATBAL on the contrary, owing to their symbiosis, their common political and economic interests, and their close kinship bonds, show a much stronger tendency to regard themselves as a distinct social group.

A minor lineage like the PUAL lineage of the GAATBAL are a com- 613
munity really well knit by common residence and blood who lead a common 621
economic, political and social life. If one takes a smaller lineage still, like the MAR lineage (see diagram No. V), one reaches the strongest unilateral unit in Nuer society, a unit whose members herd their cattle by communal arrangements; who build their huts contiguously and cultivate gardens side by side; who act as a blood revenge group in case of the homicide of one of their kin; who assist one another in providing cattle for marriage or homicide payments; who act as assistants at all important ceremonies; and who in general co-operate as a mutual assistance society for all purposes of social insurance. At least this is how I understand the relative cohesion of clan segments, though I feel that there is a leaning towards theoretical conclusions not adequately supported by a strong foundation of facts in my presentation.

The difference between kinship groups and political groups and their 613
interwoven structures may now be demonstrated by a simple diagram 614
though our definitions of groups are too elastic to permit an exact 619
correlation between kinship and political units. 621
631

DIAGRAM No. IX.

Clan + aggregate of strangers — — = Tribe.
Major Clan lineage + aggregate of strangers = {Primary tribal section.
Minor " " " " = {Secondary tribal section. Tertiary tribal section.

We have the same difficulty in deciding in some cases whether to speak 614
of two clans or of one clan with two major lineages as we had in deciding whether to speak of two tribes or one tribe with two moieties. Thus the JINACA are descended from Denac or Nac. So also are the RENGYAN and perhaps also the THIANG[1]. All these people are therefore JINACA, the people of NAC. Are we, therefore, to speak of them as one clan or as three clans? In other words, can a man of the Lou JINACA marry a woman from the Rengyan JINACA? At present I have no means of deciding this question since Lou and Rengyan are so far apart that normally the question of intermarriage would not arise. It is impossible even to express an opinion on the matter until we know something about the genealogies of the Rengyan JINACA. If they belong to the same major lineages as the Lou JINACA, namely the lineages of GAALIEK, RUMJOK and GAATBAL, we

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[1] I write RENGYAN and THIANG in capitals, though correctly speaking I suppose we should write the JINACA of Rengyan and Thiang tribes.

Leopard-skin chiefs are usually men from certain lineages and, although they are not all members of the same clan, they are believed to 791
have a kind of kinship through their office. The leopard-skin chief, unlike similar ritual officials in other Nilotic groups, does not represent 624
or symbolize the unity and exclusiveness of any political group.

The Elders

The elders of a local community provide leadership and advice when required. Prestige and influence do not come with age alone, however; a 554
man of outstanding reputation is called *tut* (bull), a term used to refer to men of high social standing who belong to lineages other than those of the dominant clan. A *tut* is head of a family and in charge of a homestead and a herd of cattle; he has the support of a large number of relations and, in addition, he must be an able man with personality.

The *gat twot* is 'the bull of the camp'. He has no defined status or authority but enjoys considerable prestige through a combination of factors - ownership of cattle, age, ritual powers, many children and relatives, personal ability and tact, and so forth. His prestige makes his personal actions and decisions influential so that, when he decides to move his homestead, others will naturally follow suit.

Districts and villages have no headmen or councils. There is not 621
even a war leader except that, in a fight, the warriors automatically follow their most notable and brave fighters. There is thus an absence of legal institutions, official leadership and organized political activity. Evans-Pritchard writes: "their state is an acephalous kinship state...." and it is the kinship structure, in conjunction with territorial segmentation, which forms the basis of Nuer political organization.(1)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NUER TRIBAL SEGMENTS AND THE LINEAGE SYSTEM

There are at least 20 clans in Nuerland, together with a number of 614
small lineages of Dinka origin. A Nuer clan is an exogamous group of agnates who trace their descent from a common ancestor. The clans are 613
segmented into lineages and each lineage is further segmented. Thus, a clan is segmented into maximal lineages, the maximal lineages are segmented into major lineages, the major lineages into minor lineages and minor lineages into minimal lineages. A minimal lineage, in the case of the Nuer, consists of a descent group deriving from a great-grandfather or great-great-grandfather. Clans and lineages are distinguished by separate names, ritual symbols and honorific titles.

The political and lineage groups are not identical but there is a certain correspondence. Often they bear the same name; for example, Gaawar 613
is the name of a tribal area, of the tribesmen inhabiting it and also of [614]
the most powerful clan in it. Like the tribe, the Nuer clan has many of the characteristics accompanying segmentation. Lineages are distinct groups only in relation to one another and there is fusion of collateral

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(1) Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940, p.181.

613 lineages of the same branch in relation to a collateral branch.(1)

621 613 Although Nuer lineages are not corporate, localised communities, they are frequently associated with territorial units.(2) Every Nuer village is associated with a lineage, though the members of it may form only a small part of the population. The village community is identified with, and called by the name of, the lineage which forms the agnatic core to which the other families and lineages are aggregated. For everyday purposes the position of this dominant lineage does not appear to be very different from that of the other lineages in the community. It is only in connection with certain ritual matters and in reference to rules of exogamy, that lineages are completely autonomous groups and become clearly differentiated from each other. Lineages function within, and as part of, local communities of all sizes, from the village to the tribe.

THE DOMINANT LINEAGES [illegible] STRANGER LINEAGES

613 When a tribal section is called after a lineage it does not follow that all the members of the lineage live there, though the majority may do so. It merely means that the lineage is a dominant one, the nucleus of the community, although large stranger lineages are often included in the area.

Migration, quarrels, intermarriage and so forth, have caused a dispersion of lineages. If, for some reason, a man or a group of brothers leave their village, they may go and live at the village of a married sister. Here they are respected as *jiciengthu* (in-laws) and their children are accepted as *gaat nar* (children of the mother's brother). The people they join are to them *cieng conyoor* - 'the people of my sister's husband', and *gaat nyal* - children of a female agnate. Except for ceremonial purposes, they will enter into close relationships with the dominant lineage of the community. However closely associated lineages may become, a lineage never merges into a different clan, for there are always certain ritual observances which cannot be shared; and only a certain amount of inter-marriage may occur, for otherwise the incest rules would be violated. A lineage can only merge with a collateral lineage of the same clan.

614 613 The close association between lineages and territorial segments, which constitutes the political importance of the clan system, is seen in the correspondence between the segments of a dominant clan and the tribal or territorial segments.(3) A certain tribe has a dominant clan associated with it. The maximal lineage of the clan corresponds to the primary sections of the clan; the major lineages correspond to the secondary sections, the minor lineages to the tertiary sections and the minimal lineages are associated with the villages comprising the tertiary sections (see above p.140). The dominant clan is therefore a framework on which the political system of the tribe is built up through a complex series of kinship links.(4)

(1) See Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940, pp.192-3, for full discussion of the segmentation of lineages and underlying structural principles.
(2) Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940, p.205.
(3) *Ibid.*, pp.211-12.
(4) *Ibid.*, pp.205-12 for further details.

DIFFERENTIATION OF STATUS AMONG THE NUER

There are three categories in a Nuer tribe: *diel*, *rul* and *jaang*. 614

The dominant clan is *diel* and members of other clans settling after the establishment of the dominant lineage are *rul* (strangers). Not every member of a clan lives in a tribe where his clan has a superior status; a man is a *dil* (an aristocrat) only in the tribe in which his clan is dominant, for the status of *diel* derives from residence on land owned by the clan. Prestige, not authority or any particular power, is attached to the *diel*; they are owners of the land, the village sites and pastures. Strangers live on the land through some link with, and the recognition of, the true owners. 554

A *rul* (stranger) is a Nuer who is not a *dil* in the tribe in which he lives. He may be influential, highly respected and even a *tut* (bull), though not belonging to the aristocratic clan. He may, indeed, group round him an entire village community in spite of the presence of several tribal aristocrats in the same village; in this respect personality and influence may count for more in everyday local affairs than a particular lineage affiliation.(1) In fact, in the everyday life of a village community, the only socially significant difference between aristocrats and strangers is in the assessment of blood cattle, and this is only found among the Jikany tribes. 554 607

'Tribal bulls', on the other hand, belonging to a lineage of the dominant clan of a tribe, are far more important in the political system than the *rul* bulls, for they are centres of clusters of kin and are also agnates, each having in relation to the others a structural position in the lineage system of the dominant clan.(2) 613 554

A Dinka adopted into a joint family is a *jaang* to the people of the family. To people outside the family he is a member of it and his status is not differentiated; he has all the rights and obligations of other members. Only the assessment of his value in blood cattle differentiates him from the Nuer. 577

Strangers may be attached to the dominant clan by adoption or by marriage. [614]

Kinship values are the strongest sentiments and norms in Nuer society, and all social interrelations tend to be expressed in kinship idiom. Since there are no headmen or councils or any of the usual forms of government, it seems that kinship values, combined with the position of the dominant lineage and its linked stranger lineages, are the organising agencies and the means of unity in each community. 602 621

The political system of the Nuer is constituted by the relations between territorial segments in the tribal system; cohesion and organisation are achieved through the association of the lineage system with the territorial units. The lines of cleavage tend to coincide, for lineages are 621 613 619

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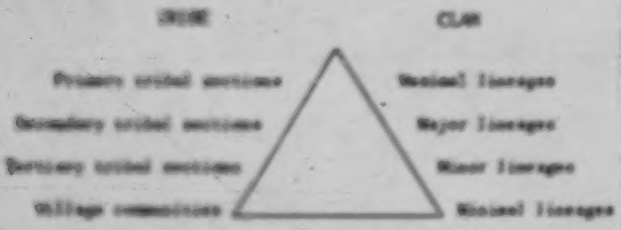
(1) Evans-Pritchard, *Kinship and Local Community among the Nuer*, 1950, p.370.
(2) *Ibid.*, p.390.

621 not corporate groups but are embodied in local communities through which
● 613 they function structurally.(1) The tendency towards the co-ordination of
619 territorial and lineage segmentation can be seen in various stages of territorial expansion between the household and the tribe.(2)



The action and interaction of the various tribal segments and the underlying principles of opposition and fusion are seen in operation when disputes and cases of homicide are dealt with, and in times of feud and war. This acephalous kinship system has a determining influence on the nature of the age sets, on the rules of exogamy, on the character of kinship, on the people, and indeed on every aspect of Nuer life.

NUER NAMES

551 Every Nuer has a personal or birth name *(cot paty)* which is given without ceremony by the parents shortly after birth; he may have a second personal name given by his maternal grand-parents. In later life, he is addressed as *gwa* (father) by the younger generation. In addition, everyone inherits a *cot paak*, an honorific or praise name of the clan of his father, which is used mostly on ceremonial occasions. A man's maternal kin will tend to use the honorific name of the mother's clan.

At initiation a man acquires an ox name derived from the colour or characteristics of the ox given him on this occasion by his father. A man is given his ox name by his age mates in particular. Maidens take ox names from the bulls calved by the cows they milk, but these are seldom used except at dances.

A dance name, nickname, or traditional name may be used in conjunction with ox names at dances. In addition a man is often addressed as 'son of --' followed by the name off his father. Among maternal relatives the matronymic is used instead of the patronymic used among paternal kinsmen. A man is called after his eldest son by his in-laws, while a woman who has status in her husband's home iin virtue of having borne him a child is addressed by the name of her eeldest child. A Nuer, therefore, may be addressed by a number of different names or titles. The one actually used on any occasion depends on the: age, relationship, and clan of the speaker, and also on the response and mode of behaviour which it is intended to evoke.(3)

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 11940, p.240. (2) *Ibid.*, p.248.
(3) Evans-Pritchard, *Uganda Journal*, 1948, Vol.12, No.2, p.166.

when speaking of them and I have used small instead of capital first letters in writing their names. This enables me also to maintain more clearly the distinction between God and other spirits, though strictly speaking, and following the gender of *pneuma*, the neuter is not inappropriate for any conception of Spirit. 776*

II

With the exception of *buk* and *col*, who are of some general interest to all Nuer, the spirits of the air are not conceptions of the same importance for everybody, and in this respect, as in others, they are unlike the conception of God. They have a more general significance than the totemic spirits, which are important only to certain lineages, whereas the spirits of the air are not tied to particular social groups. Nevertheless, a certain spirit of the air is significant for certain persons and families and not for others, because unless it has at some time or other possessed a man or one of his family or forebears he does not feel that he is personally concerned with it. 776* 613

Possession is generally known by sickness, though in the case of prophets it may also be known by abnormal behaviour. Sickness, usually, I think, of a severe and sudden kind, may be diagnosed as being due to a particular spirit and the sufferer may in future, after he has recovered, regard it as one of his personal *kuth*; and then his descendants may continue to revere it. These two ways of acquiring a spirit, by being possessed and made sick and by inheritance, are interconnected, because an inherited spirit often shows that it regards itself as still attached to the family of a man after he has died by causing one of his children to fall sick, and it is likely to be neglected and forgotten if it does not occasionally remind the family of their obligations by troubling them. So when Nuer fall sick they may, if they cannot establish the cause, with the aid of a prophet or diviner examine their heredity to discover whether one or other grandparent, very likely a Dinka, may not have had a spirit whom they have forgotten or not thought important and who is bringing their negligence to their notice by the sickness. 776* 753

Spirits may thus pass in and out of families, be forgotten and then remembered again, and perhaps in many instances forgotten altogether in course of time; or in other instances they may become 776* 177 613

*776 spirits of small lineages and their families, especially of lineages
177 of Dinka descent. The fact that they are not found as spirits of
larger lineages is perhaps further evidence of the late introduction
●613 of these spirits into Nuerland.[1] I speak here of ordinary Nuer, many, perhaps most, of whom do not in any case, particularly to the east of the Nile, have any special relationship to one or other of the spirits of the air, though they may have relationships to spirits of other kinds. In the case of prophets, their spirits are most unlikely to be forgotten and pass out of their lines of descent altogether.

*776 Seizure of a man by a spirit may be temporary or permanent.
791 When it is permanent the possessed person becomes a prophet. It
will be simpler if I describe temporary possession first. Spirits
753 cause sickness to their devotees and sometimes to others, and illness is often, especially in western Nuerland, attributed to them. If it is thought to be due to a spirit but there is uncertainty which particular spirit is responsible, the relatives consult a prophet or diviner to determine the responsibility, so that sacrifice may be made to the right spirit. They give it *duor*, a thing, as Nuer say—that is, they sacrifice to it to appease it. The sick man's recovery means that the spirit has released him. If he has not already done so, he then dedicates an animal to the spirit to show it that he is aware of their special relationship, and from time to time he makes sacrifice to it to let it know that he has not forgotten it. Otherwise it may cause trouble again.

I will describe what happened at a ceremony held when a youth called Galuak, of the Leek tribe, was sick on account of his having been seized by the spirit *nai*. This spirit, whom I have only heard mentioned in western Nuerland, has, as I have earlier remarked, a special association with ostriches, to which it is said to be very partial. When an ostrich is killed those who have a special relationship to the spirit tie some of its plumes to the entrances to their byres. When I asked whether *nai* would not be angry at the killing of one of its birds I was told that it cares nothing for the body of the bird, only for its plumes. Prophets of *nai* decorate the shafts of their spears with ostrich plumes. *Nai* seems to be regarded as one of the most inferior of the spirits of the air.

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[1] Further evidence is the fact that while people are now often named after the spirits, especially after *deng*, these spirit-names do not occur at the upper levels of Nuer genealogies.

and a number of kinsmen and neighbours were present, one of 776 x
whom, Dhoal, was asked to preside because he was a leading man 782
in the community. He began by pouring some of the beer out of the gourd over the tethering-peg of the cow devoted to *deng* when Karlual shouted to him to wait till they brought him a ladle. When it was brought, he poured a libation with it over the peg. A small son of Karlual was then told to do the same and afterwards to drink what was left in the ladle. Then various kinsmen also poured libations over the peg and all present poured beer into their hands and threw it into the air, an act called *kith*. The people then sat around the gourd and drank the remainder of the
beer while they discussed family affairs. 613 ●

All kinsmen who can do so should attend a ceremony of this 612
kind, especially close agnatic kinsmen, for this is an occasion 776 x
when kin are expected to reveal any resentment they may have in 782
their hearts towards one another. Each tells the others where they have been at fault (*duer*) in speech or act during the past year, and the issues raised are then settled peacably by discussion. A man must not keep a grievance hidden, and if he does not reveal it now he must for ever keep silence. Nuer say that all the evil in their hearts is then blown away. I think that this is the meaning of the throwing of beer into the air. They also say '*giakni dial ba ke bap e yang*', 'all evils (which they have done to one another) will be gathered to (or taken over by) the cow'. All present place ashes on the back of the beast, probably an ox, and it is then cleansed by sprinkling or blowing beer on it. However, I did not see this part of the ceremony because owing to the lateness in starting it the beast had gone to pasture with the rest of the herd. I was told that it was performed in the afternoon when the herd returned from grazing.

III

In what I have said so far about the spirits of the air I have been 776 x
speaking of their relations to ordinary Nuer. Sometimes a spirit 791
possesses a man and when he has recovered from the seizure abides with him, giving him powers of healing, divination, exorcism, and foresight. I discuss the functions of these prophets in Chapter XII. Here I give only such information about them as is necessary for an appreciation of the spirits which possess them.

and kept apart. The distinction is made very clearly in what Nuer 776 x say of a *colwic*—that he is a person who has become Spirit. They say of him that '*coa kwoth*', 'he has become Spirit'.

Having become Spirit the soul of the dead person is now not only a spirit but, as a spirit, part of God, who is all Spirit, and also, when Nuer think of the manner and instrument of death, of God conceived of in his hypostasis of *col*, the spirit of lightning. We are here faced with the problem I have been discussing with regard to the spirits of the air and which I discuss again in more general terms in Chapter IV. Each *colwic* spirit is a quite distinctive being, bearing, if it is remembered and revered, the name it had on earth as a person, so that one can say that a sacrifice is made to one particular *colwic* and not to another. But, here again, one cannot say that sacrifice is being made to a *colwic* spirit and not to God or to God in the figure of *col*. The argument developed in reference to the spirits of the air holds also for the *colwic* spirits. The relation of these spirits to God is not a disjunction, an either . . . or, but a conjunction, a both . . . and. A *colwic* is itself and it is also God.

We may develop the argument a bit further. If a *colwic* is God 776 x it is God thought of with reference to a particular family or 613 ● lineage. It is true that, as we have seen, in relation to the awesome event, the death by lightning, all who had any social connexion with the dead person are involved, but when the ceremonies I have described are over they cease to be. Afterwards only members of the spirit's family and lineage are concerned with it. A *colwic* which has become the patron of a lineage is not revered by members of other lineages. It has significance for that lineage alone. Hence there is here an important difference not only between a *colwic* spirit and Spirit comprehensively conceived of as God but also between a *colwic* spirit and a spirit of the air. The spirits of the air are much more general and mobile conceptions. Though they may be of direct concern only for those persons, families, and lineages to which they have attached themselves they may attach themselves to any person, family, or lineage and indirectly, through the political role of their prophets, they can be of importance for local communities. The *colwic* spirits, on the contrary, are confined within the narrow limits of families and lineages. They cannot attach themselves to persons who are not members of their own families and lineages. We begin to see how

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
FJ22 Nuer FJ22

x 776 the conception of Spirit is refracted by the social structure, and
● 613 this will be more clearly seen when an account has been given in the next chapter of the totemic and totemistic spirits, which are also patrons of lineages, families, and persons and of significance only for those lineages, families, and persons to whom they stand in a tutelary relationship.

×776 the word to denote a relationship between a social group and a natural species or a class of objects and 'totemistic' when the relationship tends to concern individuals rather than social groups. The distinction is not, however, a vital one and need not therefore be rigorously maintained; and such being the case, the word 'totem' may serve to denote the species or class in both instances. The same species, that is to say, may be the totem of a lineage (a totemic relationship) or of individuals (a totemistic relationship). I use the expressions 'totemic spirit' and 'totemistic spirit', as the case may be, to designate the *kwoth* of the species or class which is totem to a group or individual. Nuer distinguish between the spirit and the creature in which it may be said in some sense to make its appearance, for example, between the lion-spirit and the lion. It is to the spirit and not to the creature that Nuer devote cattle of the bridewealth of their daughters and to which they make sacrifice. Before discussing this problem further I give some examples of relationships between lineages and the natural species they are said to respect and from which they sometimes take their spear-names and honorific titles.

×776 ●613 [773] 782 Some lineages respect lions. One of them, the *Leng* lineage of the Jinaca clan, say that the lion is their totem because their ancestor Gilgil was born twin to a lion. When they sacrifice to the lion-spirit, they are said to take a leg of the victim into the bush and leave it there, calling on the lions to come and eat their share, which I have heard described as the share of the *jibuthni*, the people of a collateral lineage (p. 287). I fancy that what is meant is that a token piece of meat is thrown into the bush and that it is spoken about as a leg. It is said that if a man who has the lion for totem injures a lion he may beget a son with nails like claws. I was told of a man that he took a spear belonging to a member of the Leng lineage, a neighbour of his, and killed a lion with it, and that shortly afterwards another lion killed a number of beasts of the Leng man's herd. It was proposed that the people should go out to hunt the animal, but after discussion it was decided that it would not be just to do so because the lion had right (*cuong*) on its side. Instead, the man who had killed the first lion with the spear of its totemic kinsman compensated him for the loss of his cattle and a sacrifice was made to the lion-spirit. After compensation and atonement had been made the second lion gave no more trouble. My friend Cam of the village of Yakwac on the Sobat river was born of a woman of the Leng lineage and 776 ˣ has, moreover, married a wife to the name of his maternal uncle 613 ● and begotten children to him by her; so, though he is not himself 782 a man of the Leng lineage, he has intimate ties with it, and he lives with its members. His brother told me how one day Cam killed a lion which he believed to be killing his cattle, for, his brother commented, 'Cam has no sense at all'. He returned [828] from his successful hunt bending his fingers like claws and crouching as though he intended to spring on the people around him. A sheep was at once sacrificed to the lion-spirit, and Cam composed himself. While I was living in a cattle camp at the same village of Yakwac, which is occupied by part of the Leng lineage in the dry season, a girl of the lineage was taken hold of by the lion-spirit and had hysterics. Her family sacrificed a sheep to the spirit and dedicated a cow to it, for the seizure was thought to have been due to their failure to dedicate a cow to it earlier; and the girl was restored to her normal self. The Thiang lineage of Kurmayom village, also in Lou country, are another lineage whose totem is the lion, and they told me that they would not kill lions unless the lions first killed their cattle, for then the lions would have done wrong (*dwir*) and they would be in the right (*cuong*) in retaliating. This lineage has *mut luony*, spear of lion, for its spear-name. Another friend, Rainen of the Leek tribe, told me that he used to respect lions because his paternal grandfather's mother had been born twin to a lion in Dinkaland (she was a Dinka), the lion twin having run away into the bush. He said, however, that he had ceased to respect them when they began to eat his cattle. He conceded that the lions which ate his cattle were small lions from Dinkaland and not the large lions of Nuerland, but he felt he had been wronged by lions as a body and now refused to respect lions of any kind. He said '*ce theak thuk*', 'the respect is finished'. The same man told me that in the past, before lions began to eat his cattle, he had sometimes tied up a goat in the bush for them, and they had taken it. In the terminology I am using he had a totemistic relationship to lions. I have no certain knowledge that any mammalian species besides the lion is the primary totem of a Nuer lineage. The waterbuck, as will be seen later, is a secondary totem of a large clan.

A considerable number of lineages respect reptilian species. 776 ˣ
The large lineage of the Lak tribe who are known as *cieng* Gangni 613

776 613 respect the monitor lizard. The story is told that long ago some people of *cieng* Gangni were dying of thirst on a journey. They were wandering, light-headed with thirst and the heat of the sun, when they saw a monitor lizard in a *thep*-tree (*Acacia verugera*). They intended to kill it but it escaped them and following it brought them to water, to which, being a water creature, it naturally made. Ever since, their descendants have respected the lizard and dedicated cows of their herds to the lizard-spirit. I was told that if there is one of them present when a Nuer of a different clan kills one of these lizards, as apparently sometimes happens, he throws a bead or some grass on to its body to make recompense (*ba je col*), because he saw his totem killed. I was told also that should a man of *cieng* Gangni knowingly eat of its flesh he would die, while should he eat of it unknowingly he might fall sick or become crazy. Nuer also say that should a man who respects the lizard harm it he may beget a child with deformed legs resembling the legs of the lizard. The *cieng* Gangni also respect the *thep*-tree for the reason given in the story I have related and, though why I do not know, the *keac* tree (*Crataeva religiosa*) and *pak*, the Dead Sea apple (*Calotropis procera*). One of their spear-names is *mut thep*, the spear of the *thep*-tree, and one of their honorific titles is *gat thep*, son of the *thep*-tree.

There are a number of lineages in different parts of Nuerland who respect crocodiles and dedicate cows to the crocodile-spirit, the Cany major lineage of the eastern Gaajak being one of the [773] largest. The reason given for the totemic relationship is a twin-birth of an ancestor with a crocodile's egg, the egg having been placed in a stream. I was told that a twin-birth of this kind may occur at any time in a lineage which respects the crocodile. Mem- [782] bers of these lineages are said sometimes to milk the cows dedicated to the crocodile-spirit and to pour the milk into a stream in which there are crocodiles. One of their honorific clan-names may be *nya nyanga*, daughter of the crocodile. It is said that should a man who respects crocodiles harm one of the reptiles without cause, or eat its flesh, he may beget a child with a rudimentary arm resembling a crocodile's leg; and I was told of a woman of one of these lineages who ate crocodile flesh, thinking that it was turtle flesh, and afterwards bore a child so deformed that it had to crawl on its belly. Those who respect crocodiles enjoy a special immunity from their attacks and I have been

assured by old men when about to wade through crocodile- 776 x
infested streams that I need have no fear, because people whose 613 ●
totem was the crocodile lived nearby, and they contrasted the
benevolence of their local crocodiles with the savagery of croco-
diles in other districts. When once I remarked to a Nuer about
a man fishing far out in the Sobat river, in a place I knew to be
infested with crocodiles, that I thought he was taking a big risk,
my companion simply replied 'maybe he respects crocodiles'. I
have also been told that men of these lineages call the reptiles out
of the water and stroke them. There can be no doubt that people
who have the crocodile for totem are regarded by other Nuer as [789]
having some control over them. They are summoned by their
neighbours to perform a rite to prevent crocodiles from attacking
them or their flocks and herds when streams and rivers must be
crossed. The *gwan kwoth nyanga*, the person who possesses the
crocodile-spirit (who has the crocodile for totem), bends a metal
bracelet till the ends overlap and binds them in this position with
grass, and then presses the bracelet into the river mud, calling on
gwandong, grandfather or ancestor (in this context, the crocodile-
spirit), to let the people pass over in safety. This operation closes
the jaws of the crocodiles while people and cattle are in the water.
He may also, on certain occasions, as when a stream is being fished,
bind a goat and push it under weeds and reeds into the stream for
the crocodile-spirit at the same time as performing the bracelet
rite; and it is said that he must then sit on the bank and abstain
from drinking water while people are still in the stream.

A large number of small lineages in Nuerland respect snakes. [177]
All those whose descent I was able to trace are of Dinka origin.
Some respect *nyal*, the python. Those I have asked about their [773]
totemic affiliation have told me that a python was born as twin
to their ancestor. When they sacrifice to the python-spirit they 776 x
take a goat to the edge of the stream and there kill it, in imitation 613
of the python's killing of its prey, by blocking its mouth and 782
nostrils and bouncing on its belly till it suffocates. They throw a
piece of the sacrificial meat into the stream and another piece
towards the land. They boil the rest of the meat, taking care that
no soup of the boiling is spilt, and eat it. A senior man then
sharpens a new cattle-peg and, after driving it into the ground
and winding grass round it, pours some of the blood of the goat
at its foot, asking the python-spirit to take its 'cow' and let the

x776 people be at peace. They complete the rite by building a small
●613 mound of ashes as a shrine (*yik*) to the spirit. I have seen goats
782 with what the Nuer call *ma nyal*, python-like, markings dedicated
[778] to the python-spirit in kraals. A Lou tribesman told me that when he was a boy a python entered his father's kraal and paid particular attention to a goat dedicated to its spirit, and his father gave it milk in a gourd and rubbed its scales with butter. All Nuer say that if any snake enters the homestead of a man who respects that species he will offer it milk and rub its scales with butter, but I have not seen this done. They say that a snake which has been treated with these courtesies may enter the byre and sleep there and, when it wakes, crawl among the cattle in the kraal, paying friendly attention to the cow or beast of the flock dedicated to its spirit. A man who respects pythons respects also bees, because Nuer consider their markings to be like those of the python, and will not kill them or eat their honey.

x776 Another snake respected by a large number of small lineages of
Dinka descent is *lualdit* or *rir*, which I believe to be the tree cobra.
613 A Nuer of the Leek tribe told me how this totem had come into
[171] his family, and his story has some interest in that it illustrates the
[773] way in which a lineage may acquire a totem. His father was digging a hole in which to plant a support to a new cattle byre when he scooped up a cobra with the earth in his hands. In his fright he killed it with a digging-stick. Later he fell sick and the form of a cobra appeared to him in a dream and told him that it wanted a *duor*, a gift, so he sacrificed an ox to the cobra-spirit and dedicated a cow to it. His sons now respect the cobra, and their descendants may continue to do so. During my first expedition to Nuerland one of my Zande servants was chased into my tent by one of these cobras and I was forced to shoot it. Later in the day a man of the cattle camp where I was residing came to complain that I had killed his *kwoth*, totem, when I might easily have sent to ask him to remove it from my tent. He demanded compensation, which I made with a lump of tobacco. Some people say that if you can
[825] kill a cobra without it seeing you, you will find *wal*, medicine,
inside it. If it sees you it will spit out the medicine before you can kill it. Those who respect the cobra respect also the little red soldier ants, here again apparently on account of a resemblance of colour.[1] When bitten by them they do not slap them on their

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[1] Dr. Lienhardt tells me that a beast dedicated to the spirit of cobra should

×776 •613 bodies and kill them as other Nuer do, but they carefully remove them and place them on the ground. When my camp in the eastern Jikany country was overrun by these insects and I tried to drive them out with fire, some men whose totem they were protested, and they requested me not to harm the ants. When a man sees his totem being harmed he feels it an obligation to make a formal protest and he may ask for a gift to remove the offence, but he does not make it occasion for a quarrel. Miss Ray Huffman relates (in a letter) how many years ago she and a fellow missionary, Mr. Adair, killed a cobra just outside the Nasser mission compound. The people of the homestead where it was killed showered grain on its body to cover it 'so the god in it would not be angry with them for letting it be killed'. However, I should record Mr. Jackson's statement that a dispenser of Malakal hospital, presumably a lad of some foreign people, 'was travelling with a party of pedlars [presumably Arabs] and killed a snake which he came across. Although only a boy he was at once attacked by the Nuer of the Longaish section and beaten into unconsciousness.'[1]

[177] Some lineages, also of Dinka origin, have the spitting viper, *thatut*, for totem. I have been told that there are some Nuer who respect the snakes called *gur* and *dengcek* (the puff-adder), and it is possible that other snakes are totems. The small Cuor lineage of Dinka descent in Leek tribal area have the serpent *lou* for their totem. This huge, and presumably imaginary, creature is said to frequent streams and to have a comb like that of the crested crane and hair on its head which waggles from side to side as it swims in the water. Members of this lineage say that their ancestor was [778] sleeping in a hut with his wife and small child when one of these serpents came through the doorway and lay across them. The wife woke up and swooned at the sight of it. Later the man woke up, and finding his wife unconscious, but without seeing the serpent, promised God an ox for her recovery. Afterwards he saw the serpent and dedicated a cow to that serpent-spirit, and his descendants have respected the *lou* ever since. One of them, a man called Dol, told me that he once speared a *lou* by mistake, thinking that the movement he saw in the water was that of a fish, and was brought home prosrated. He recovered after sacrifice had been made.

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be a brown beast calved of a brown beast. The snake is called *lualdit* on account of its brown (*lual*) colour.

[1] Op. cit., p. 167.

SPIRITS OF THE BELOW

×776 ●613 773 I have been told that there is a small lineage, called Waloak, in eastern Gaajok country who respect tortoises. There is a curious story accounting for their adoption of this totem. A man of the lineage had his cow taken by a man of a neighbouring village and his repeated requests for it to be returned to him were unavailing. One day when he was going to the river he found a tortoise and wrapped it in a sheepskin. He continued on his way, and as he was passing the village of the people who had taken his cow, he took the opportunity of once more asking for it. They refused his request, but at that moment the tortoise poked its head against the skin pressing it outwards. The man bent over it and told it to be quiet as it would get its share that day. Again he asked for his cow and again it was refused, and once more the tortoise wriggled in the skin and was told to be quiet. The people of the village then became frightened because they thought that the man had some powerful medicine in the sheepskin and that, if they did not give his cow back to him, they might die with their children and cattle; so they surrendered the cow. The mention of medicine suggests a recent origin for the story.

×776 613 Some lineages respect birds. The Jibegh of western Nuerland respect the ostrich and will not use its feathers as ornaments. Their spear-name is *mut wuot*, spear of the ostrich. It is said that ostriches will not eat the millet of members of this clan. [826] I once met a man with only three toes, stocky and undeveloped, to one of his feet. I was told that his maternal grandmother had the ostrich for totem, and that on the day of her daughter's marriage one of the bridegroom's people, as is the custom, threw a spear at her mud windscreen. She took the spear as her right and on examining it found that part of the shaft was bound with ostrich-skin. When her daughter bore a son he was deformed as I have described. The ostriches—or, rather, the spirit of ostrich—had stamped the likeness of an ostrich on the child.

Some small lineages of Dinka origin respect cattle egrets. One such lineage are the Rial of western Nuerland. I also met Lou [782] tribesmen who have the cattle egret for totem and I was present when some of them sacrificed a goat to the cattle egret-spirit on the bank of the Sobat river, not because anyone was sick, which is a common occasion of sacrifice to a totem-spirit, 'but just because they think of (*tim*) it'. This spirit is said to be a river-spirit

because they sacrifice to it at the river's edge, near which cattle 776x
egrets are generally to be seen. 613●

I am uncertain whether the many little species of birds the Nuer class together as *kec*—weaver-birds (the Sudan dioch), finches, and others, known collectively in the Sudan as durra-birds—are rightly regarded as the totem of lineages or whether the spirit associated with them is possessed by individuals and not by groups. It may be that only the son who takes on the ritual functions of a *gwan keca* or *gwan kwoth keca*, an owner of durra-bird or an owner of the spirit of durra-bird, respects these little birds, and not all his sons or all members of his lineage; but I [177] believe that they are respected by small lineages of Dinka and Anuak descent and therefore include them in the list of Nuer totems. The Nuer class, as we do, all these little birds together because they feed together on millet seed. They may be seen to rise in swarms from the millet gardens and, whilst in most years Nuer pay little attention to them, they are in some years so numerous and destructive that the entire crop is threatened. It is then necessary to protect it by posting boys, sometimes on platforms erected for the purpose, to scare them off. The owners of 776x
the threatened gardens may also summon a man who respects 613
the birds to induce them to depart. He takes some stems of millet 782
of different varieties from each of the gardens of the village and, carrying this bundle, heads a procession of the villagers to where the gardens meet the bush. There he utters an invocation over the goat, telling the birds that it is their cow and exhorting them to turn towards the bush where they will find plenty of grass seed to eat, for that is the millet of the birds. He tells them that the people have come out of their village to greet (*lor*) them with a 'cow' (goat) and requests them to leave the millet alone. When he has sacrificed the goat to the durra-bird-spirit he places the millet he has gathered on the ground with their heads facing the bush to show the birds the direction in which it is desired that they should go. I was told that the carcass is left in the bush. On the occasion on which I was present an expert had been brought from some distance to perform the rite, and a local man, who also respected the birds and could therefore have performed it, felt slighted, and was said to have threatened that next year he would cut stalks of millet before the harvest was ripe. Nuer often cut stalks of unripe millet to chew, but a man who has these birds for totem must not do so (71) lest he cause the birds to devour the crop.

000 for totem must not do so lest he cause the birds to devour the crop.

x776 Plants are respected by some lineages. They may not cut them
or burn their wood. The large Gaanwar clan respect the *nyuot*-tree
613 (*Cordia Rothii*) and the *koat*, tamarind, tree. The ancestor of
[773] this clan fell from heaven holding a branch of the *nyuot*-tree in
his hand or, some say, he descended from heaven by, or on to, a
nyuot near which was a small tamarind.[1] Members of this clan
call for aid on *kwoth nyota* or *kwoth kota*, the spirit of these trees.
The *nyuot*, a branch of which is often erected in the homes of
[778] Gaanwar as a shrine to this spirit, is associated with rain on
account of the humidity of its leaves even in the dry season. The
verbal form of the word, *nyot*, means 'to drizzle'. Members of the
[789] clan may therefore be called on to bring rain in time of drought.
This they do by placing a sprig of the tree in water, sacrificing an
animal, and calling on the spirit of the clan, which is the spirit of
the tree, for rain. It is, we may suppose, on account of their connexion
with water that the clan have as additional totems the
waterbuck and the fish *nyiwar*, *cur*, *lam*, *yiau*, and *gwejual* and
can also speak of their spirit as '*kwoth puoara*', 'spirit of our
waterbuck', '*kwoth lameda*', 'spirit of our *lam* fish', and so on. I
[262] have been told that women of this clan will not eat the meat of
a cow which has died calving, but I do not know the reason for
this abstention. The scattered Jwal clan share some of the Gaanwar
totems. They seem at one time to have formed a single clan
with the Gaanwar. The Jingop and Keunyang lineages of western
Nuerland respect the *ngop* tree, the sycamore or wild fig (*Ficus
Sycomorus*), and speak of '*kwoth ngoapna*', 'spirit of our fig-tree',
to which they dedicate cows in their kraals, as is usual where there
is a totemic relationship. The largest clan in Nuerland, the Gaatgankir
of the Jikany tribes, respect gourds. Their ancestor was
[773] found in a gourd (*kir*). They will not cut or step over the stems of
gourds or prepare them to serve as utensils, for they must not
x776 handle a gourd which still contains its pulp and seed. Nevertheless
613 they use them as utensils for the same purposes as do other
Nuer. The clan is of Dinka origin, though it now counts as a Nuer
177 clan. Other plants respected by lineages, usually of Dinka descent,

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[1] Some variants of the story of his appearance on earth are recorded in *The Nuer*, p. 230.

are the *thep*-tree, papyrus, the *kwel*-tree (*Ficus platyphylla*), and 776 x
lel, the dom palm.[1] 613 ●

Some lineages respect rivers and streams. The ancestor of the [177]
Juak lineage of western Nuerland, of Dinka descent, is said to [773]
have come out of a big lagoon called *gwol*, so his descendants are known as Juak *jigwol* and the honorific titles of their sons and daughters are *gat* and *nya gwol*, son and daughter of (the lagoon) *gwol*. They respect all rivers and streams, and when a man of the
lineage intends to cross a river he throws a bead into the water [782]
calling on his 'grandfather' (the river-spirit) to accept the offering and bring him in safety to the other side. A woman of the lineage will not take off her skirt when crossing a river as other women do, and unmarried girls, who are naked, place a few wisps of grass round their loins before entering the water. I was told that were a married woman to forget and step into the water naked, and were then to remember her obligation, she would return to the bank and pull off a bead or tassel from her skirt and throw it into the water, telling the river-spirit that she had not purposely
offended it and asking it to accept her offering in atonement. The [773]
Gaatiek clan also respect rivers, and the Nile in particular because God brought their ancestor out of it. Being *jiyier*, river-people, they respect also the *gwot yier*, papyrus, and will not cut it. Their spear-names are *mut kier* and *mut yier*, spear of the Nile and spear of the river, and their honorific names are *gat* and *nya bar*, son
and daughter of lagoon. They dedicate black cows to the Nile- 776 x
spirit and they sometimes pour a libation of milk from these cows 613
into rivers. When people are taking their families and cattle across 782
rivers they milk one of the black cows dedicated to the river-spirit 791
into a black snail-shell, which a man of the clan then turns upside down at the river's edge and keeps pressed into the mud while the people and herds pass over. This keeps the jaws of the crocodiles closed. In virtue of their relationship to rivers certain senior members of the lineage may also perform a rite for the safety of those

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[1] Mr. H. C. Jackson, op. cit., p. 165, records that one of the clans of the Bul tribe respect the tree called in Arabic *duruba*, because their ancestor hid in this tree when fleeing from avengers. It is called *rir* in Nuer and is probably to be identified with *Pseudocedrela kotschyi*. Professor and Mrs. Seligman, op. cit., p. 213, say that the *kac* tree is respected by the Bul Nuer because their miracle-working ancestor used to sit under it, and by the Jidiet clan because their ancestor was killed with clubs made of its wood. They do not on this occasion tell us the sources of their statements.

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taking part in fishing battues. Such a man is called *gwan biedh*, owner of fish-spear, and *kuaar juaini*, priest of grass, because he protects the people by winding grass round the point of a fishing-spear which he then drives into the earth. He also fills a snail-shell with mud and presses it into the mud of the river, and he bends and binds together the points of a metal bracelet and stamps it into the mud. He may also bind a goat and place it in the river as a sacrifice to the river-spirit, which he calls on to protect the people against the dangers of the water. I was told that he must not himself take part in the fishing, but must sit on the bank and abstain from drinking water. He can also heal wounds caused by fish-spears by spitting in them. The Gaatiek clan is probably of Dinka origin.

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The Nyanding river in the eastern Jikany country is the totem of a small lineage of Anuak descent who live on its banks. It is said that once upon a time the river-spirit asked for a bride, and a girl was decked for marriage and thrown into it by her father Juac, whose name means 'grass' in Nuer. This girl who was sacrificed to the river-spirit (*ca je kok yir*) was called Nyanding. I was told that 'she was not drowned, the river took her', and that she became part of the river-spirit. The present 'owner' of the river, Monytuk Joak, a man of this lineage, told me that each year he binds a goat and throws it into the river. He also protects people taking part in large-scale fishing by treating a bracelet and a shell in the manner I have described. When a girl of the lineage is married, a male goat and a female goat are paid as part of the bridewealth. The male goat is sacrificed to the river-spirit and the female goat is dedicated to it.

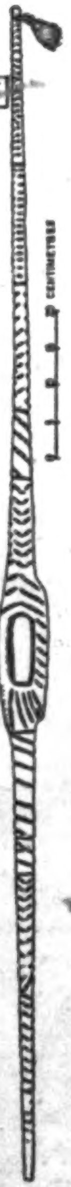

FIG. 2
Girl's dancing-stick

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[177]

Some Nuer lineages respect cattle with certain markings. The Kwok lineage of western Nuerland and their kinsmen among the Atwot people (a section of the Nuer who have to a large extent adopted Dinka culture) will not keep in their herds an animal with *ma ŧeng* markings, that is an animal which has a coloured back but is otherwise white. If one is calved by their cows they

exchange it, or give it to one of their affines. When I asked whether 776x
this might not compromise the daughter or sister to whose husband 613•
it was given I was told: 'They have gone over to another lineage [773]
(*gol*), they are not your people any longer.' It is related—the theme of the story is widely distributed among the Nilotic peoples—that a man of the lineage went to bathe in a stream and placed his bead-strung girdle on the bank, where a *ma reng* cow came and looked at it while he was bathing. The man saw the cow near his girdle, but he did not see a kite swoop down and carry the girdle away in its claws; so when he discovered that it had disappeared he thought that the cow had eaten it, and he killed the animal and examined the contents of its stomachs in vain. Later someone found the girdle a long way off, where the kite had dropped it, and brought it to its owner, who was then sorry that he had killed the cow. Moreover, the owner of the cow uttered a conditional curse (*biit*) against him, saying that the spirit of cattle with *ma reng* markings would dog his footsteps and would kill him and his descendants were they ever again to drink the milk of cattle with *ma reng* markings, use their dung for fires, or clean their teeth with the ashes of their burnt dung.

The Gaagwong lineage of the Gaatgankiir clan respect cattle with *ma cuany* markings—an incongruous patch of colour in the middle of one of the common markings. The Jimem, or at any rate one of their lineages, the Jiruet, said to be of Dinka origin, also respect *ma cuany* cattle, and they are respected by all monorchids, to whom all cattle with this peculiarity are thought to be dangerous. This Jimem lineage also respect monorchids, both human or animal, and they have *mut tora*, spear of monorchid, for their spear-name.

The Jikul clan respect the hides of cattle. As far as I am aware, 776x
they sleep on them as do other Nuer, but it is said that they refrain 614
from beating a hide to get the ashes of their dung fires off it, as
other Nuer do, and shake it instead. The ancestor of this clan is [773]
believed to have fallen from the sky, wrapped in a fawn-coloured ox-skin, into a pool of water. Hence their spear-name is *mut kuli*, the spear of the hide, and their honorific titles are *gat* and *nya yan*, son and daughter of fawn-coloured, and *nya kuli*, daughter of hide. I have heard it said that a man of this clan will not eat heads of cattle and will not accept compensation in cattle for adultery with his wife. I was also told that should a man of the

000 sign of spiritual activity, as is also the birth of a calf with *ma cuany* markings.

×776 We may conclude that Nuer totems tend to be creatures and things which for one or other reason easily evoke the idea of Spirit in any Nuer and are hence suitable symbols for Spirit in relation to lineages; and then the image of the symbol may become through association linked with other images, leading to additional totems. The Gaanwar clan have a special connexion with rain, which is a symbol of Spirit in its special relationship to their
[821] clan. The *nyuot*-tree is a secondary symbol which, on account of its peculiar appearance and habits, is associated in the Nuer mind with rain. The waterbuck and several species of fish are further symbols linked to the *nyuot*-tree as secondary totems because, we may presume, they also, in their different ways, are associated with water. An interpretation of the totemic relationship is here, then, not to be sought in the nature of the totem itself but in an association it brings to the mind. Similarly those who respect
[825] bees respect them not because they are bees but because their colour resembles to Nuer eyes the python, and it is probably the same with soldier ants and the tree cobra.

As we have seen, in their totemic relationships it is Spirit rather than the totems in which Nuer are interested. In so far as they are interested in the totems themselves it is not in their intrinsic nature but in their character as symbols through which Spirit manifests itself to human intelligence. Consequently, since the totemic attitude is neither derived from, nor primarily directed towards, the things as they are in themselves but the things as representing and manifesting Spirit, Nuer would not be at all surprised at anything being, or becoming, a totem. Anyone may at any time suddenly find himself in a totemistic relationship to some class of objects, and if for one reason or another his descendants trouble to remember and maintain the relationship, then that class becomes the totem of a lineage. Let us consider how Nuer think of totemic relationships coming about.

×776 I have had frequent occasion to remark that those who respect
177 a totem are Dinka or of Dinka origin, and our discussion of the
●613 whole problem of Nuer totemism is complicated, as was our discussion of the spirits of the air, by the fact that Nuer regard their totems as having for the most part come from the Dinka. I have often heard true Nuer say that when you find that a man respects

reptiles and such things as parts of animals and diseases you may 776
be sure that he is a Dinka or had a Dinka mother or grandmother; 177
and I have found this to be so. Hence true Nuer tend to despise 613
many totems, especially reptilian totems, as something Dinka. They say that the *kuth* of Nuer lineages are spirits of the above and not earthly spirits. 'If a true Nuer (*gat dila*) respects (*thek*) a totem (*kwoth piny*) it is because of a maternal link (*cieng mandongni*).' The word *thek* is here used in reference to *kwoth* because it is identified in thought with some hypothetical material appearance which, since it is not specified, cannot be designated. What this statement means is that while true Nuer clans and lineages do not commonly respect things of nature, and especially not things that creep and crawl, an individual may respect them out of regard for a Dinka mother or grandmother. It is supported by the evidence I have recorded, and it may be further noted that those whole clans in Nuerland who respect natural species are generally either of Dinka origin, like the Gaatgankir, or of a peculiar mythological, and therefore possibly foreign, origin, like the Jikul and the Gaanwar. It is also to some extent supported by the common Nuer explanation of a totemic relationship between a lineage and a natural species as having come about through the ancestor of the lineage and a member of the species being born twins. This is a common Dinka explanation of totemic associations.[1] Moreover, the names of totemic spirits, such as *joo, cuar, fadiet, ulengdit,* and *fajook,* are Dinka words. Personally, I consider the great majority of lineages found in Nuerland today with totems to be of Dinka origin. The important point, however, is not so much that they are Dinka lineages as that Nuer regard totems as something Dinka. They have nevertheless become fully incorporated into Nuer religious thought.

In spite of what Nuer say about totems being Dinka they also 776
think of those of clans or large lineages as having come down to 613
them from their ancestors of ancient times. They became attached to certain lines of descent so that not all lineages of the same clan necessarily have the same totems. They were divided up (*dak*) among the different lines of descent. Nuer say that the '*ring kukien*', 'the meats of their sacrifices', spread out along the lines

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[1] C. G. and B. Z. Seligman, op. cit., pp. 142–51. The Seligmans were writing about the eastern Dinka. Dr. R. G Lienhardt tells me that the western Dinka have the same belief.

x 776 of descent. Other totems were added later. 'The spirits of their
613 sacrifices (to which they sacrifice) entered into the generations of
descent (*kath*).' This might happen in various ways, some of which
I have described. An animal or plant, or rather Spirit in and
through an animal or plant, helps a man in trouble, and so forth.
776 The commonest aetiology is twin-birth of a man and a member
773 of a natural species. Twin-birth is so stock an explanation of
845 totemic affiliations among the Nuer that when asked why a certain
lineage respect a certain species they often, if they do not know
any story accounting for the association, say at once and without
reflection that it must be because of a twin-birth of this kind. It is
only when it would be totally unreasonable that a Nuer rejects
this as a likely explanation. In discussing totemism with some
Nuer on one occasion one of them told me that he had heard that
there were people who respect fire. When I asked whether this
meant that a man and fire had been born together my question
was greeted with derision: 'How, now, could a woman carry fire
in her womb?'

776 Strange though it may seem to us, Nuer claim that twin-births
845 of men and animals have taken place not only in ancient times
but also in recent generations. They may take place even today
and occasion no surprise. I had not been long in Nuerland when
one morning my Nuer servant Nhial came in some excitement to
tell me that a woman of his village, where we were staying, had
given birth to a hippopotamus and a male child, both dead. It was
too late to see what happened, but I was told that the hippopotamus had been placed in a nearby stream and the child, being a
twin and therefore in Nuer eyes a sort of bird, had been placed in
a tree. In answer to my questions, I was further informed that it
was uncertain whether the family would on account of what had
happened respect hippopotamuses in future, though had the
child lived he and his descendants would certainly have done so.
The reason given for this particular twin-birth was that the
woman's husband had killed several hippopotamuses and they
had revenged themselves on him by stamping their likeness on
one of the twins (*ca gat cal e rau*). In this case, therefore, one is in
doubt whether what was taken to the stream was regarded as a
hippopotamus in the full sense or not, for animals can stamp their
likenesses on a human foetus; but at least the incident shows us
how the totemic mentality of the Nuer inclined them at once to

SPIRITS OF THE BELOW

I discussed in Chapter I Spirit conceived of, in its most comprehensive and transcendental sense, as God, the father and creator in the sky. In Chapter II I discussed the spirits of the air, Spirit conceived of under more particular forms and which falls from above and seizes and enters into men, and through them is associated with political activities. These spirits of the air also sometimes become spirits of lineages. This refraction of Spirit by the social order was even more evident in our discussion in the same chapter of the *colwic* spirits, which are God, or Spirit, in a particular and exclusive relationship to lineage groups. We find the same refraction of Spirit by the social order in the totemic spirits, which are Spirit in a more immanent and material form, beholden in creaturely appearances. Each of the totemic spirits is Spirit in a particular relationship to a lineage, which expresses its relation as an exclusive social group to God in the totemic refraction by respecting the creature which stands as a material symbol of the refraction. The imprint of the social order on the conception of Spirit is very evident in the totemic beliefs and observances of the Nuer. And we see in the totemistic spirits the conception of Spirit refracted to the level of the individual, who besides his general relationship to God, which he shares with all men, and his totemic or *colwic* or air-spirit relationship to God in virtue of his membership of a lineage, may as an individual have a special relationship to God as revealed to him in one or more particular modes and forms.[1] 776×

In his account, soon to be published, of Dinka religion Dr. Lienhardt uses the word 'emblems' to denote the species and classes of objects respected by Dinka lineages. The word could appropriately be used in reference to the species and classes which are objects of respect by Nuer lineages, and perhaps more suitably than the word 'totems', for what I have described is certainly not what we are accustomed to think of as totemism. Nuer respect the creatures not for themselves—their relationship to them is only secondary—but because they are symbols. But if the totems are 776× 613●

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[1] Much the same conclusion was reached about Dinka totemism by Mr. R. T. Johnston. He says of the *joh*, totemic or totemistic spirits, of the Bor Dinka that 'to not a few people their *joh* is a Bain Deng, apparently conceived of as either an emanation of Deng Dit, i.e. Nhialich himself, or as God in special relation to the individual' (op. cit., p. 126). The same point is discussed at length, and with much illustrative material, by Dr. Lienhardt in his forthcoming book on Dinka religion.

x 776 613 symbols or emblems what are they symbols or emblems of? They are not, at least primarily, diacritical signs of social differentiation. Lineages are distinguished by names of ancestors and spear-names and honorific titles and not by totems. Even though the spear-names and honorific titles may sometimes contain a reference to totems, lineages are not thought of, at any rate primarily, as people who respect certain species and classes. Also, many lineages have no totemic affiliations, and those who have them tend to be thought of as at one time not having had them and of having at some point in time and through some event acquired them; and Nuer also tend to think of them as something they got from the Dinka. Further, many lineages have the same totem, and were Nuer to think of the unity of a lineage and its distinction from other lineages in terms of totems we would expect to find that respect for the same totem would be a bar to intermarriage, but it is not so. People with the same totem intermarry if there is no kinship between them. Nor can the totems be adequately described just as symbols of Spirit. Crocodiles, bees, and ants are not symbols of Spirit to people who do not respect them—they kill and eat crocodiles, they eat honey, and they destroy the ants without qualms. Totems are therefore to be described as symbols of particular relationships, rather than of Spirit; relationships, that is, between lineages, or it may be families or individuals, and God figured by the symbols in relation to those lineages, families, or individuals.

x776 It is not that the members of a group see themselves as a group through a totemic class of objects which are then further conceptualized collectively as a spirit of the class, but rather that the conception of Spirit, which is in itself quite independent of the social structure, is broken up along the lines of segmentation within the structure. It is not that the members of a group see themselves as a group through a totemic relationship to millemes which are then conceptualized as a spirit of millemes, but rather that the conception of Spirit as manifested in the death of a child from a milleme getting in his ear is given a social dimension in accordance with the lineage and kinship principles of the Nuer. The people concerned did not first think that they had a special relationship to millemes, on account of something intrinsic to these coins, which they expressed in the notion of Spirit. They had first the conception of Spirit and it was a quite fortuitous

627 782 x776 poured a libation of water over its tethering-peg as a prelude to delivering an oration. He told the story of the accident all over again and commented on it to God in this vein: 'ah God! We call on you about this wound. There is no enmity between us [the party of the injured youth and the party of the spearer]. This wound came of itself [they do not attribute it to the spearer because it was an accident and also because the youth will not die and so there will be no *thung*, debt of homicide]. Throw the badness away with this cow [they call a sheep or goat a 'cow' in sacrificial contexts]. Let the wound heal. Ah God! it is only a headache [it is not a sickness of any importance—they speak of the most ghastly wounds in this way], let it be finished, let it go right on [heal without complications]. Let it be removed from the man's body. Let us be at peace.' Another man of the home party also made an invocation in much the same language: 'Friend (*maadh*), God who is in this village, as you are very great we tell you about this wound, for you are God of our home in very truth. We tell you about the fight of this lad. Let the wound heal. Let it be ransomed [with the sheep]'; and so forth. A representative of the visitors now said a few words to the same purpose and the sheep was then sacrificed. The meat of both sacrifices was eaten by the people of the home after the visiting deputation had departed; and also the carcass of a third animal, another wether, which the people of the home later sacrificed after three of them had made further invocations over it in much the same vein.

In this ceremony Spirit was addressed simply as *kwoth* and no designated refractions were mentioned, and when on such occasions Nuer speak to, or about, *kwoth* without differentiating specifications they are, as I have explained, speaking to, or about, Spirit in the comprehensive conception of God the creator and the sustainer of life. This is often the case in their sacrifices, and it is the same when they pray for peace and deliverance from evil.

x776 ●613 That emphasis is given to the refractions when a social group, acting as such and marking itself off from other groups, makes a sacrifice on behalf of itself or of one of its members in virtue of his membership of it, and that they are then to be regarded as diverse exclusive representations of God by which he is figured to the groups concerned in a special way as their patrons is evident also from other considerations. It is clear that totemic spirits of lineages are Spirit conceived of in a tutelary relationship to the x776 613 lineages. The *colwic* spirits are also Spirit in a tutelary relationship to the families and lineages to which they belonged in the flesh before they were metamorphosed into spirit. Also, the spirits of the air may have a tutelary relationship to families and lines of descent, and where their attachment is more to an individual prophet he has public functions through which the spirit becomes patron of local and political communities. Totemic spirits may also, though in a rather different manner, have a secondary significance for political groups through the association of dominant lineages with tribal sections. Likewise, though to a lesser extent, nature sprites are Spirit in a tutelary relationship to families; and even fetishes, though of a rather different complexion, are Spirit in a tutelary relationship to individuals, and sometimes to local communities to which these individuals belong. The attachment of all these spiritual figures to social groups is indicated in various ways, most noticeably in ceremonial and in payment of cattle to them at marriages.

x776 That these spiritual conceptions lack autonomy and are rightly regarded as social refractions of God is further shown by the fact that *kwoth*, without any distinguishing name, can become associated with any social group or office. Thus, as we have seen, Nuer speak of the *kwoth* of a leopard-skin priest, 'the spirit of the flesh', and they speak also of '*kwɔth muonde*', 'the spirit of his (the priest's) earth' (pp. 291–2). This is no particular *kwoth* but is Spirit seen in relation to priestly powers and functions. Likewise
[845] they speak of *kwoth cuekni*, the spirit of twins, to which sacrifices are made at the birth of twins and to which a cow of the bridewealth of the sisters of twins is dedicated. Here again, this is not thought of by Nuer as some particular spirit which has an existence and name of its own but as God in a special relationship to twins, or rather to the event of a twin-birth. Another example is the
[561] way in which they speak of the *kwoth* of an age-set, the tutelary, nameless, spirit which protects the members of the set and avenges wrongs done to men by their age-mates. This cannot be a distinctive spirit in its own right as it were, if only because the sets pass in turn into oblivion and are replaced by others. It is rather God thought of in relation to a particular set, just as he is also the separate, while still being the same, guardian spirit of the other sets. He is both the one and the many—one in his nature and many in his diverse social representations.

775 of the departed. On such occasions Nuer usually have a definite
782 ghost in mind, but in contexts in which the lineage as a whole is
involved they may speak of *jook dial*, all the ghosts (of their
lineage), though I have seldom heard them do so; and the reason
for this is that when, on ceremonial occasions, Nuer speak of a
lineage as a collectivity to which both dead and living belong they
speak in terms of Spirit rather than of ghosts, of '*kwoth* which
created our ancestor', rather than of the ancestor himself, and of
'*kwoth* of our fathers', rather than the fathers themselves. The
conception of the ghosts is subordinated to that of Spirit.

Nuer do not pray (*pal*) to the ghosts which have no power in
775 themselves to grant requests. On such occasions as I have mentioned
782 they may invoke (*lam*) them, but even when they do this
776 the ghosts take second place to God in some such phrases as
'*kwoth, yene jook*', 'God, thou and the ghosts'. Even when beasts
are reserved for them, Nuer do not formally dedicate them to the
ghosts as they do to their spirits, and though they sacrifice on
certain occasions on their behalf or in their honour or memory,
I do not think that it can be said that sacrifice is ever made to
them, at any rate not to them by themselves, for it may be that in
those sacrifices in which God and the ghosts are invoked together
Nuer think of the sacrifice being to both. Even if this is so, the
victim is consecrated to God and not to the ghosts. Likewise,
[778] though the ghosts are associated with the *riek* or post-shrine which
elderly men erect in their homes, it is a shrine firstly to God as
God of the hearth and in whatever further refractions he may be
figured as the guardian of the family and lineage. It is therefore
called *riek kwoth*, God's shrine, and not *riek jookni*, ghosts'
shrine. There is no cult of the dead, and their graves, not being
[769] marked, are soon forgotten unless a tree happens to spring from
the tomb, when it may be named after the man buried there. A
man's memorial is not in some monument but in his sons.

768 Dead persons, though for the most part only men, are remembered
•613 in their names, and this is a matter of great importance
551 both for the Nuer themselves and also for an understanding on
our part of their sentiments. Every man likes to feel that his name
will never be forgotten so long as his lineage endures and that in
that sense he will always be a part of the lineage. Consequently,
Nuer do not so much think of the ghosts of their forebears as being
those members of their lineage who are in the home of the dead,

but rather as names numbered, as it were, in the archives of the 613
lineage. They think of the dead continuing in this way in the 768
living. It is to ensure the survival of the dead in their names, Nuer 551
say, that they have the customs of the levirate, widow-concubinage,
and ghost-marriage.

I have discussed these practices at length elsewhere,[1] and here 587
it is only necessary to show their connexion with the matter under 611
discussion. Nuer practise the true levirate. Widows are neither 551
remarried nor inherited but continue till death to be married 768
to their dead husbands to whose names they continue to bear
children begotten by their dead husbands' brothers, with whom
they have in certain circumstances an obligation to live. If, however,
for one or other reason, a widow does not choose to live with
one of her dead husband's brothers she may cohabit with any man
she pleases, but all children such a widow-concubine may bear to
her lovers count as children of her dead husband. The custom of 588
ghost-marriage further ensures that every man must have a son 551
who will be called after him '*gat* so-and-so', 'son of so-and-so'. If a 611
man dies without a male heir and without leaving a widow to bear 768
him male heirs it is a paramount duty for his near kin to marry
a wife to his name before they take wives in their own names. In
theory at any rate, therefore, every man has at least one son and
through this son his name is forever a link in a line of descent.
This is the only form of immortality Nuer are interested in. They
are not interested in the survival of the individual as a ghost, but
in the survival of the social personality in the name.

The memory of a dead man is thus kept alive by its being constantly 551
on people's lips through the favoured patronymic usage 768
during the lifetime of his children and afterwards in the recitation 583
of a line of descent. This is why at a mortuary ceremony
Nuer stress that a man who has died is not entirely finished. 'His
children will carry on his name.' A dead man's name is also on
people's lips in reference to bridewealth cattle. If a man has a
right to cattle in the division of a girl's bridewealth he does not
lose that right at death. Indeed, if he is dead he not only retains
the right but his claims are given precedence, as being 'the right
of a ghost', over those of the living. These cattle are *ghok jookni*,

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[1] 'Some Aspects of Marriage and the Family among the Nuer', *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, 1938 (reprinted in *Rhodes-Livingstone Papers*, No. XI, 1945); also *Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer*, 1951, chaps. iii and iv.

411 association with the spirit *wiu* through the further association of
614 this spirit with lightning and hence with the idea of striking, so
that the spear *wiu*, perhaps also because it has a material existence, has become the prototype of clan 'spears'. Of the other spear, that of the Thiang clan and tribe, who occupy a territory I have not myself visited, we are told by Mr. B. A. Lewis only in whose possession it is and that it is called *mut bah thiang*.[1] Dr. P. P. Howell, who gives its name as *mut bar thiang*, tells me that he has not seen it but Nuer have described it to him as being nearly worn through with much polishing. It is unknown whether any cultic practices like those I have mentioned above are connected with it.

411 Apart from the Gaatgankir and the Thiang spears the spear-
614 symbols of the Nuer clans and lineages are only names. Through
●613 the association of a tribal community with the clan dominant in
552 it the spear-name of this clan is shouted out in invocations when
the whole tribe goes to war but, except in this context, which I discuss below, in which a political group is merged conceptually with a clan or lineage, it is only called out in reference to a descent group as an exclusive group. Thus, when I asked a Wot tribesman whether his tribe had a tribal spear he replied: 'We have many spears. One lineage (*gol*) has one spear, another lineage has another spear, a third lineage has a different spear, and so on.' By 'spear' he meant a spear-name, not an actual spear. Consequently, if two
[582] persons have the same spear-name there is likelihood of agnatic
relationship, and spear-names are therefore often spoken of in connexion with proposed marriages. One hears Nuer saying in discussions about the permissibility of a proposed marriage 'what about their spears?', 'they have the same spear, they cannot marry', or 'their spear is different to ours, we can marry their daughter'.[2] At a wedding the masters of ceremonies on the bride's
[585] side and on the bridegroom's side, each acting as representative
411 of his clan, begin their formal announcements that the marriage
614 negotiations have reached a successful conclusion (*twoc ghok*)
613 by shouting out their clan spear-names. The spear-name is also
597 shouted out by the master of ceremonies as the opening words of
552 the sacrificial invocation he makes when a Dinka boy is adopted

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[1] B. A. Lewis, op. cit., p. 82.

[2] Should the two clans have the same spear-name this is not always a bar to the union, for secondary spear-names may indicate that they belong to different clans, or other circumstances may be taken into consideration.

into the lineage of the man who has given him domicile, the expression for adopting being either *lath buthni*, to be given shares (in sacrificial meats) and hence to be given agnation, or *lath muot*, to be given a spear (-name), and hence to be made a member of the clan. He also shouts it out in sacrificial invocations at mortuary ceremonies, at settlement of blood-feuds, at initiations, and on other occasions which concern the whole clan (p. 288). When, as mentioned above, clan and tribe are identified politically in war and raiding a representative of the dominant clan of the tribe brandishes a spear and calls out the spear-name of his clan on behalf of the whole tribe. This man, called *ngul*,[1] is usually, perhaps always, a leading man of the senior lineage of the dominant clan, that descended from the eldest son of the ancestor of the clan. Thus in the Lou tribe this rite is performed by a man of the Gaaliek lineage of the Jinaca clan. Likewise the Tar lineage who have charge of the *wiu* spear are descendants of Thiang, the eldest son of the founder of the clan; and the Thiang clan who own the *thiang* spear are descended from Thiang, the eldest son of Gee.

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I cannot always explain the meaning of these spear-names or even translate them, and Nuer themselves cannot always say for certain what they mean, for they arose in ancient days. It is clear, however, that they are charged with symbols expressing the unity and continuity of clans and lineages. I give a few examples, choosing those in which the meaning is more or less evident. The Jiruet lineage have *mut tora*, spear of the monorchid. This lineage respects monorchids, whether they be man or beast. The Gaatiek clan have *mut yier*, spear of the stream, because their ancestor came out of a stream. The Gaatnaca clan have *mut ghama*, spear of the thigh. This seems to refer to the loins of the ancestor from whom they sprang. The Gaaliek lineage of this clan have the secondary spear-name *mut tang*, spear of the spear-shaft, because the *ngul*, whom I have referred to above, of the Lou tribe is of this lineage. He uses a spear-shaft in war ritual. The Gaatleak clan have *mut leak*, the word *leak* being simply, it would seem, taken from the clan name itself. Many leopard-skin priests are members

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[1] He is also called *ngul ghok*, *ngul* of cattle, an expression which probably refers to the taking of enemy cattle on raids, and *gwan muot*, possessor of the spear. As he may break a spear-shaft in two and throw the pieces in the direction of the enemy he is further known as *gwan tang*, possessor of the spear-shaft. I was told that he may also invoke God for success in hunting in time of famine.

411 of this clan and, as I have explained, they use *mut Geaka*, spear
614 of Gee, as an alternative expression. The Thiang lineage have a
●613 secondary spear-name *mut Thiang*, spear of Thiang, which is the
552 name of their ancestor.

When a man calls out his clan spear-name he often does so with embellishments, which are further symbolical representations of the clan. They refer to its ancestor, its spirits, its totems, its ghosts, its cattle, or its origin and traditions. Thus a Gaatgankir clansman in making invocations adds to *mut wiu* such expressions as *mut kwe, mut jangemo me coali Kir*, and *mut gwara. Kwe* is the fish-eagle and also a colour distribution of cattle. The shining of the spear is likened to the white face of the fish-eagle against its black body and to the white splash on the head of a dark coloured cow or ox. *Jaangemo me coali Kir* means 'that Dinka who is called Kir' and refers to the Dinka origin of the clan. *Mut gwara* means 'spear of our fathers'. The spear in the hand of the speaker, the spear *wiu*, the spear used to cut open the gourd in which the ancestor was found, and the spirit *wiu* all seem to be fused in the representation. In a similar manner the Gaawar clan may add to their spear-name *mut wang*, spear of the eye (I think), such expressions as *mut nhial, mut puara*, and *mut kwoth nyota*. I do not know why the spear is called 'spear of the eye' (if that is the right translation). *Nhial* is the firmament and *puar* is a cloud. Their ancestor fell from the sky and the clan is therefore associated with sky, clouds, and rain. When he fell he had in his hand a sprig of the *nyuot* tree, a tree associated with rain. Hence the *kwoth nyota*, the spirit of the *nyuot* tree.

Thus the spear-name is either that of the ancestor of the lineage or clan or in some way signifies him, and the elaborations of it, such as by reference to a spirit or a totem, are also just different ways of denoting the lineage or clan as a whole; for the name of the ancestor stands for the whole clan, both here and elsewhere. We have noted earlier (p. 169) how in myths a lineage is personified for the purpose of the action of the story, the name of the lineage or of its tribal territory being used to indicate its ancestor. Nuer sometimes even insert the name of a lineage into a genealogy as its founder, though the form of the word shows that it is the name of a group and not of a person; or they give the founder a composite name, appending the name of the lineage to the personal name, for example, Nyang Gaaliek, Nyang being the name of the person and Gaaliek the name of the lineage of his descendants, name of the person and Gaaliek the name of the lineage of his descendants.

I have attempted to show that the spear brandished in sacrificial 411
invocations stands for the person and that when this person speaks 782
as a representative and on behalf of the clan, as he does in collec- 614
tive sacrifices, it stands for the clan. In the one case it is the right 826
hand (vitality) of the individual and in the other the right hand 721
(vitality) of the ancestor (the clan) which is emphasized. In the second case the spear is closely associated with the idea of the clan as a battle host.

When we ask why clans should be symbolized by a spear, or rather by the idea of a spear contained in a spear-name, and not by something else, we cannot give an acceptable answer in terms of the scarcity, and therefore high value, of iron nor in terms of simple utility. The symbol is not *yieth* or *you*, iron.[1] Nor is it the *bidh*, the fishing-spear, which is perhaps even more essential for Nuer than the fighting-spear, for they have no substitute for it and could not survive without a good supply of fish. It is the *mut*, the iron fighting-spear. The fact that the wood, horn, and bone pointed spears do not figure as symbols might suggest that it is because it is made of iron, which lasts longer and makes a more efficient weapon, that the *mut* is the symbol of clans, but it appears to me to be a more satisfactory explanation that it is because the *mut* not only stands for the right hand and hence vitality but is also the symbol of going to war and of making sacrifice.

The word *mut*, besides meaning a fighting-spear, has a general 411
sense of taking part in war and raiding: '*ce Nath wa mut*', 'the 721
Nuer went raiding'; '*ca mut nang Jaang*', 'war was taken (by the 613 ●
Nuer) to the Dinka'. The idea expressed by the word *mut* in these 614
examples is not so much the general idea of war and raiding as the idea of a collectivity, the clan or lineage in its political or tribal embodiment, going to war or going on a raid. Hence Father Kiggen correctly translates '*te ke mud mediid*' (his spelling) as 'they have a big army'.[2] By synecdoche 'spear' stands for 'battle host'.

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[1] It is true that Nuer lick any metal in taking an oath (p. 297), but I regard this as being a derivation from licking a spear, for which any metal stands as a substitute, in the same way as the honorific titles of the Gaatgankir clan, son, and daughter, of iron, derive from the *wiu* spear. The words *yieth*, metal, and *yiedh*, to spear or to stab, are surely connected.

[2] J. Kiggen, op. cit., p. 206. One may ask, in the light of this discussion about

231 881 their wearing, incapable of use, and that they also render useless the left horns of their favourite oxen by deforming them.✗

Human thought and expression are inevitably constructed out of man's experience of the world around him. There is nothing that should surprise us in Nuer speaking metaphorically of boys by the same word (*ruath*) as they use for young bulls and for the male young of other animals, and, by contrast, of men by the same word (*tut*) as they use for adult bulls and adult males of other animal species. It is natural—it would be remarkable were it not so—that Nuer use cattle metaphors in speech and gesture. Nevertheless, the evidence, some of which I have presented, suggests that there is more in it than that. Whether Professor Seligman's psychological use of the word 'identification' is correct is a question that lies outside my own competence and the scope of this book, but it cannot be denied that there is a moral identification, a participation imposed on the individual by his culture and inextricably bound up with religious values. When henceforward I speak of identification it is to be understood in this sense.

✗ [See p. 235, cat. 116, —Analyst]

II

231 782 ● 613 614 We have noted that there is a personal side and a collective side to Nuer religion and that we may speak of personal and collective types of sacrifice. We have noted also that in the collective type the officiant represents the whole clan, that the spear he holds in his hands is that of the ancestor of the clan, and that he invokes God as the God who created his ancestor and the God of his fathers. We have further noted that the sacrificial victim, although in fact it is an ox or a surrogate for an ox, is not spoken of as *thak*, ox, but as *yang*, cow, a general term referring to any bovine beast, with a plural form *ghok*, meaning 'cattle'. This suggests that the victim embodies the general idea of the equivalence of cattle and men in the sacrificial act, and there is certainly what we may speak of as a collective identification of clans and lineages with their herds. This is expressed in the honorific titles of clans and lineages. We have been discussing hitherto the equation of man with ox. These titles introduce us to the idea of an enduring relationship between a social group and its ancestral herd.

On the day when, by the cutting of lines on his forehead, a boy

881 On the day when, by the cutting of lines on his forehead, a boy becomes a man there is much rejoicing of his kinsfolk, and especially of his father and paternal kin. In talking to Nuer about this day they have impressed on me that what is uppermost in the minds of the older men, particularly at the initiation of an eldest son, is that the continuity of the family and lineage is now assured. Initiation is the threshold to marriage and the birth of sons who will remember their forebears; for as soon as the period of healing and seclusion is over the initiates embark on a full sex life leading to courtship, marriage, and begetting. An initiate is part of a lineage and clan and his initiation is seen in terms of its collective life. His new relationship with the cattle is then not only a personal one, important though that is, but the personal relationship is incorporated in a more general lineage one.

231 ●613 614 Nuer conceive of the ancestor of a clan, and likewise the ancestors of its component lineages, as having possessed a herd, the descendants of which have had, and continue to have, though distributed among different families, a constant relationship with the descendants of their original owners and are still thought of as one herd. This ancestral herd is a fiction, for the cattle are being constantly dispersed and replaced by others at marriages, but conceptually it is an enduring collectivity. There is ideally a constant attachment, the clan and its herd forming a joint community down the generations, so much so that a common, perhaps the commonest, explanation of a division in the clan is the fighting of bulls of the ancestors of the divided parts. The social cleavage is represented in tradition as a cleavage in the herd.

231 613 614 553 196 The unity of clans and lineages is symbolized in the names of the ancestral spears, which we have already discussed* and in honorific titles, chiefly derived from the names of cows. In both cases we are dealing with ideas and not actual things, with the idea of a clan spear handed down as an heirloom and with the idea of the present herds of the members of a clan being descended from the ancestral herd. Nuer say that '*mut kene paak jalke kel*', 'the spear and the honorific title go together'. If a man has a certain clan spear he must have one or more honorific titles which go with it. Both have come down together from *tuok nath*, the beginnings of the Nuer. The *paak*, a word found with the same meaning in some of the other Nilotic languages, may be described as an honorific title used as a mode of salutation or address. It is commonly used on ceremonial occasions, as on formal visits, at dances,

*[See pp. 240-47, cat. 116 (258) —Analyst]

and at marriage and initiation ceremonies. Otherwise it is mostly 231
a complimentary usage which expresses a formal relationship of 613
reserve, as between a husband's mother and her son's wife, and 614
then it is chiefly a woman's mode of address.

The title consists of *gat*, son (of), or *nya*, daughter (of), followed 553
by a word which usually refers to a cow said to be that on whose 196
milk the ancestor of the clan or lineage was nurtured in infancy, though it may refer to the place where the clan or lineage is said to have originated, or to some object connected with its ancestor, or to its totem. Nuer say that clans either '*ba paak ka kwi yangdien*', 'are saluted by reference to their cow' or '*ba paak ka kwi ciengdien*', 'are saluted by reference to their (original) village site', but since the salutation generally refers to a cow the expressions '*paak*', 'honorific salutation', and '*paakene yang*', 'honorific salutation of cow', are synonyms. The words are often exceedingly difficult to translate, or even to discover the meaning of, especially when they relate to cows, for here the Nuer language proliferates symbolism in luxuriant elaborations of fancy; and representations of ancestral cow, ancestral home, totem, and totemic spirit, are sometimes fused in the titles, which are built out of a number of residues all of which derive from and express lineage values. I have listed and discussed some of these honorific titles elsewhere,[1] and there is no need here for a detailed consideration of them. We have only to note the central place the idea of a cow has in them, the cow standing for the herd and hence also for the lineage of its masters.

It need not surprise us that it is a cow that is referred to and 231
not an ox or bull. It would be inappropriate to refer to an ox since, 613
as I understand the matter, the whole point of using a symbol 553
from the herds is to express in a single representation the idea of 196
the unity of a lineage and its cattle, the cattle which sustain the lineage by their milk (the cow suckles the ancestor) and by constant calving provide them with bridewealth for marriages whereby sons are born and the lineage continued, and with a means of maintaining communication with Spirit and ghosts. Male animals do not answer the requirements of the symbolism. The great majority of the bulls are castrated, and, if not later disposed of in marriage, those which survive murrains are sacrificed; and the animals which are left entire are not thought of as being, like the

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[1] 'The Nuer: Tribe and Clan', *Sudan Notes and Records*, 1934, pp. 25–29.

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male members of a human lineage, a line of descent. In tracing back the lineage of a beast, which Nuer can sometimes do to several generations, they do so by the points of the dams and not the points of the sires: an ox of certain markings was born of a cow of certain markings and it of a cow of other markings. Descent in the herd is, so to speak, traced matrilineally; and it is the cows which are seen as the stable element, which calve cow-calves, which calve cow-calves in their turn, and so provide the constant and continuous nexus between herd and lineage. Consequently, if at marriage most of a herd is dispersed and only a core is retained, it is some cows which are kept so that the herd may be built up anew through them. Therefore, it is to the cows of the ancestors, and not to their bulls, that the honorific titles of clans and lineages refer.

The lineage–herd equation can thus be considered as a collective expression of the man–ox equation. The one does not derive from the other but they are parts of a single complex representation, which finds its most logical expression in the rites of sacrifice. The name of the ox of the speaker may be shouted out in sacrificial invocations because its name stands for his own, but when the sacrifice is on behalf of a whole clan the exordial words are the spear-name of the clan, which goes together with the cow-title of the clan, representing the relation of the clan to its ancestral herd. The two symbols, ox-name and spear-name, represent two aspects of the sacrificial relationship between men and cattle, the personal and the collective. The one or other aspect is emphasized according to the nature of the sacrifice.

III

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The facts we have examined, taken severally or together, point to the conclusion that there is the idea of equivalence between men and cattle, and the only plane on which there is anything that can be called equivalence is that on which men and cattle are things of the same order, so that one can be substituted for the other, namely in sacrifice, or in other words in relation to God. We have seen that in those sacrifices which have the most significance for the study of Nuer religion, the personal ones, the lives of oxen are substituted for the lives of men. This is not only evident in what

CHAPTER XII

PRIESTS AND PROPHETS

I

IT has been noted that women do not make sacrifice and that 782
though any man can make it only senior men who are fathers of families, 'bulls' as the Nuer call them, do so. Personal sacrifices are usually, as in most cases of sickness, performed by the head of the family or some senior kinsman and neighbour, but sacrifices which have more than domestic import and are thought of as involving a whole lineage or clan—collective sacrifices—have to be performed by a person called *gwan buthni*, whom I have spoken of as the master of ceremonies.

The verb *buth* means 'to share', and since collateral lineages of 613 ●
a clan and also clans with common ancestry may claim portions 614
of the flesh of sacrificial victims at each other's collective sacrifices, 727
there is said to be *buth* between them. They are to one another 782
jibuthni, people who share. The word is also used when speaking of the adoption of a captured Dinka into his captor's lineage. He is said to be *lath buthni*, given shares. A sacrifice is made and in the invocation at it the guardian spirit of the lineage is asked to receive the Dinka into its care and the ghosts of the ancestors are informed of what is being done. The Dinka is smeared with the victim's chyme. He now counts as a member of his captor's lineage and has a right to partake of the meats of its sacrifices and also to claim a portion of the meat at sacrifices by any other lineage to which this lineage stands in a *buth* relationship. *Buth* has consequently the further meaning of agnation. *Jibuthni* are agnates. *Lath buthni* is to be given agnation. Agnates are people who share in the flesh of sacrifices.

Buth relationship is stated also in terms of the division of 613
elephant tusks or of cattle exchanged for them. When hunters 614
kill an elephant the right tusk goes to the *koc*, the man who first 224
speared it, and the left tusk to the *gam*, the man who speared it [301]
next. The tusks are cut into portions to be used as armlets—one of the most precious of Nuer possessions—or are exchanged for

● 613 cattle, and the portions of ivory or the cattle are divided among
614 those relatives of the spearsmen who receive cattle of bridewealth
and bloodwealth and the flesh of sacrifices. Those standing in a
224 *buth* relationship to the spearsmen also have rights in the tusks.
This means in practice that a section of the tusk, or its equivalent in cattle, goes to the particular *thok mac*, minimal lineage, of the spearsman's clan to which the *gwan buthni*, master of ceremonies, of his family belongs, and it is this man who gets it.[1]

782 Each family has its master of ceremonies, who is a member of
a lineage collateral to that of its head and therefore one of his
613 distant agnatic kinsmen. A son takes his father's place in this
593 service. The same man may act on behalf of the heads of several families of the same minimal lineage, and one of his close agnatic kin may act in his stead, since he carries out his functions not as an individual but as representative of a group. The office is not necessarily reciprocal, for a man may act as master of ceremonies to a family of one collateral lineage and have as master of ceremonies to his own family a man of a different collateral lineage. Also, a family may have more than one master of ceremonies, the second belonging to a different collateral lineage from the first. Moreover, it would seem that if one of the persons who usually acts in this capacity is not available his place may be taken by any distant kinsman who can be held to represent him. Nuer are very latitudinarian in such matters; but the point we have to note is that on certain occasions a whole clan or large lineage offers up the sacrifice, and the officiant ought then to be someone outside the family and close kin most immediately concerned who represents the interest of the wider group, which participates in the sacrifice through him.

782 A master of ceremonies functions at weddings, mortuary and
613 *colwic* ceremonies, settlements of blood-feuds, adoptions, initiations, severings of kinship to allow intermarriage or cohabitation, the building of new byres, and the division of elephant tusks. On these occasions he calls out the clan or lineage spear-name and then makes an invocation, usually prior to animal sacrifice. By calling out the spear-name he identifies the whole clan or lineage with the offering. When the victim has been killed he cuts through the scrotum (*juak tem*), this being the commencement of the skin-

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[1] See also P. P. Howell, 'A Note on Elephants and Elephant Hunting among the Nuer', *Sudan Notes and Records*, 1945.

ning in ordinary sacrifices at which he officiates; and Nuer often 782
refer to him in his sacrificial role as 'the cutter of the scrotum'. 613 ●
Does this usage symbolize the principle of agnation? Possibly, for [727]
after the sacrifice by which a Dinka is adopted into his captor's lineage it is said '*ca juak tem*', 'the scrotum has been cut', to signify that the Dinka is now a member of the lineage. If we are right in thinking that it may have this meaning, then the cutting of the scrotum is a most appropriate symbolic act, for the *gwan buthni* represents, as a member of a collateral lineage, the unity of the clan as a corporation of segments, the principle of fission which is in the very nature of a lineage structure. The master of ceremonies receives some of the sacrificial meat at sacrifices at which he officiates and he generally has a right also to the hide or half of it. He has also a right, as I have explained, to a section of any elephant tusk that comes into possession of the family he serves, and the first turtles and the skins of the first leopards and serval cats killed by its sons are given to him. He receives a calf or sheep from the husband's people when one of its daughters is married.

The role of the *gwan buthni* in sacrifice is seen to be a social 782
role rather than one of a specifically religious kind. He does not function in virtue of any qualities in himself. He is a *dwek*, a layman, not a *kuaar*, a priest. He is called upon to make the first invocation when the sacrifice concerns the interest of a whole clan or lineage. His clan or lineage alone is involved or if, as in marriage, another clan is also involved he acts on behalf of his own group alone; and consequently he addresses Spirit in the refraction by which it is represented to the clan—maybe in a totemic refraction or just as '*kwoth gwara*', 'God of our fathers'. His role in the proceedings is, therefore, determined primarily by the nature of the social activities in connexion with which he is asked to make sacrifice and not by any specifically religious considerations.

II

When sacrifice is made in consequence of some sin or to end 782
certain states of interdiction, of sin-potential—in circumstances, 793
that is, which involve the notion of *nueer* or of notions akin to it—it is desirable, and sometimes necessary, for the rite to be performed by a *kuaar twac* or *kuaar muon*, a priest of the leopard-skin

793 [789] injured party an excuse to accept compensation without loss of honour.

It is a matter of surprise that the Nuer priesthood should have this association with the earth and take its most common title from it. There is no cult of the earth such as we find in West Africa. Priests are not traditionally linked to a particular territory as are the 'fathers of the land', ritual agents who are such in virtue of being descendants of first settlers, among some other Nilotic peoples. Nor can a satisfactory explanation be advanced in terms of agricultural activities. Nuer do not highly esteem cultivation of crops and may be presumed to have engaged in it even less in the past when cattle were more numerous. Cattle husbandry receives more of their attention and is their absorbing interest, but it and fishing, which is also most important for them, so far as they are the object of ritual attention, are the concern of other, and less important, ritual specialists than the priest of the earth. Moreover, Nuer do not attach much importance to such ritual as he performs in connexion with the crops, and it is entirely secondary to his other functions. On the other hand, it can be seen that the association of priesthood with the earth is a representation which accords with the general idea of man being identified with the earth and God with the sky, the priest being essentially a person who sacrifices on behalf of man below to God above.

793 •613 614 Lineages of leopard-skin priests are found in all tribal sections, and in most parts of Nuerland they are in the category of *rul*, strangers, and not of *diel*, members of the clans which own the tribal territories. It is necessary that they should be widely spread, because their services are essential to Nuer everywhere, and it is significant that they are generally not members of lineages identified with political groups, because they have to act as peacemakers between such groups. The two best-known priestly clans, the Gaatleak and the Jimem, have no tribal territories of their own but live, as families and small lineages, in most or all territories owned by other clans. They are like Levi, divided in Jacob and scattered in Israel. Their priestly filiation goes back to Gee, the first man and the first priest, from certain of whose sons the priestly virtue (*ring*) has passed down the generations. However, although their powers are hereditary, and although all members of a priestly lineage can, therefore, act in a priestly capacity, in practice only certain families do so, and these families can function as priests wherever

they happen to reside. Moreover, persons who do not belong to a 793
priestly family can become priests, transmitting their powers to 613
their children, by what the Nuer call *tetde*, by hand. This means 614
that such a man is given a leopard-skin by a priest and told to carry out priestly services. In some myths of origin of the Jikany tribes the leopard-skin was given by the ancestors of the dominant lineages to their maternal uncles that they might serve as tribal priests. The structurally opposed lineages of the clan were then in the common relationship of sisters' sons to the line of priests, which thus had a mediatory position between them.[1] A layman is still today sometimes invested with the leopard-skin and the priestly powers that go with it, and I have known a Dinka chosen for the purpose. This in itself teaches us much about the way Nuer regard their priests. Priestly duties are tiresome and ill-rewarded, but somebody has to perform them. Nuer society is very far from being a hierocracy.

The chief services a priest performs are in connexion with homicide 793
and the importance of his office derives from this essential 628
function. Only he can perform these services,[2] which are to release the slayer from the state of extreme danger his act has placed him in and, where circumstances are such that an active blood-feud is likely to develop if a settlement is not reached, to give the slayer sanctuary, to negotiate a settlement, to perform sacrifice to enable normal social relations to be resumed, and to rehabilitate the slayer. All these functions, in addition to having a political significance, are also essentially religious acts or derive from the priest's sacred character.

As soon as a man kills another he hastens to the nearest priest, 782
who draws the point of a fishing-spear down his right arm from 793
where it joins the shoulder and sacrifices a beast, called *yang riem*, 628
the cow of blood. Were the slayer to eat or drink before this has
been done it would be serious *nueer* and cause certain death, for 783
the blood which is drawn is thought to be in some way that of the slain man which has passed into him. If there is likelihood of blood-vengeance the slayer then takes sanctuary in the home of

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[1] I recorded this fact in *Sudan Notes and Records* (1935, pp. 46–48), but I have only recently realized, in the light of Dr. Lienhardt's research among the Dinka, the significance of it.

[2] Except perhaps on such rare occasions as when a priest himself or one of his family is killed. I was told that then an elder of the aristocratic clan of the tribe might act in the priest's place.

793 628 distinctive role is that which he plays in homicide, that is to say, when two social groups, groups of kin and local and political groups, are in a state of violent opposition to each other and the whole community is involved in consequence, directly or indirectly, in a state of interdiction. He functions as administrator of oaths in a similar setting. The oaths either arise out of homicide or concern matters which may result in homicide. There are strong feelings of hostility between the parties; otherwise oaths, with their terrible consequences, would not be taken. Serious incest may provoke similar feelings, because, Nuer ideas about incest being what they are, the persons concerned in it may belong to different descent groups and, indeed, are for various reasons likely to do so. In situations of *nueer* in which hostile feelings are not aroused, as when twins are born or a person is killed by lightning, the head of the family or its master of ceremonies officiates. These are family and lineage affairs. So, whereas the *gwan buthni* acts in sacrifice on behalf of an exclusive social group, the leopard-skin priest for the most part performs sacrifices in situations in which two groups are opposed to one another and which therefore require a person unidentified by lineage attachment to either to act on behalf of the whole community. The priest thus has a central position in the social structure rather than in religious thought, for his priestly functions are exclusive not because, on account of the sanctity of his office, only he can perform sacrifices, but because representatives of neither party to a dispute can effectively act in the circumstances obtaining. As he entirely lacks any real political authority or powers it is understandable that he could not carry out his functions unless during their performance his person was sacrosanct. The presence of a priesthood adds nothing to the dominant ideas of Nuer religion. It is rather these ideas which give to a political role its necessary attributes. Put in another way, the Nuer have priests who perform certain politico-religious functions but their religion is not intrinsically a priestly religion.

●613 793 231 Another hereditary and traditional functionary is the *wut ghok*, the man of the cattle, sometimes also spoken of as *kuaar ghok*, the 'priest' of the cattle, or *ring ghok*, the 'virtue' (literally, 'flesh') of the cattle. There are men of the cattle in every tribe and tribal section, and they belong to lineages of a number of different clans, all those I have come across being of true Nuer descent. As in the

case of the leopard-skin priestly lineages, any member of a lineage 613
of men of the cattle can perform the services attached to that office, 793
but in practice only some, and senior, persons would normally be
called upon to do so. These services have less religious and social 231
importance than those of the *kuaar muon*, and a man of the cattle
is not by virtue of his office a person of social importance. One
hears of him chiefly in connexion with his ability to perform rites
to cure sick beasts and to make barren cows fertile, usually by
spitting on grass and beating the animal's back with it while
asking God to make the beasts well or fertile. In times of murrain
he may sacrifice an ox to God. I was told that after consecrating it
he would speak in this vein: 'What, God? Take this ox, it is thine.
Thou art master of the world, the world is thine and it is thine
affair alone. What, God? Do not kill all the cattle. What will our
children eat? No one will live. Oh God, take thy cow and spare
a portion of the herds. God, I am a man of the cattle and I have
come to sacrifice this beast; take it, it is thine.' Nuer say that he
addresses '*kwothde*', 'his spirit', that is Spirit as figured in relation
to his office, the God of his fathers. He may also on raids lash a
tethering-cord in the direction of enemy herds to ensure booty. He
may be consulted about the time of moving to dry-season camps.
He is said to sprinkle people with milk in time of sickness, and at [766]
his own mortuary ceremony his kinsmen and possessions are
aspersed with milk. He is buried in fresh cattle manure. He cannot
accept cattle in compensation for adultery with his wife. His curse
can cause cattle to die and a man to have diarrhoea if he drinks
milk. All these customs and notions give him that mystical association
with cattle which is indicated by his title and also by his
badge of office, a circle or two of tethering-cord round his neck.

As I have explained earlier (pp. 255–6), initiation of boys to 793
manhood is intimately bound up with their relation to the cattle. [881]
It is therefore appropriate that it should be a man of the cattle
who in each tribe determines when a new age-set should commence 561
and when it should close, performs sacrifices to open and
close the periods of initiation, and names the sets; and this is the
most important public function of any man of the cattle. We see
here again how, as in the cases of the masters of ceremonies and
the leopard-skin priests, the chief religious function of men of the
cattle, their formal sacrificial and ceremonial role, is concerned
with group activities. In their case the activities are relations